BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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Pope John Paul II Philatelic Exhibition

In the last several years Polonus held a fall stamp show in addition to its regular Polpex in March. This came about as our show was connected with October being the Polish American Heritage Month.

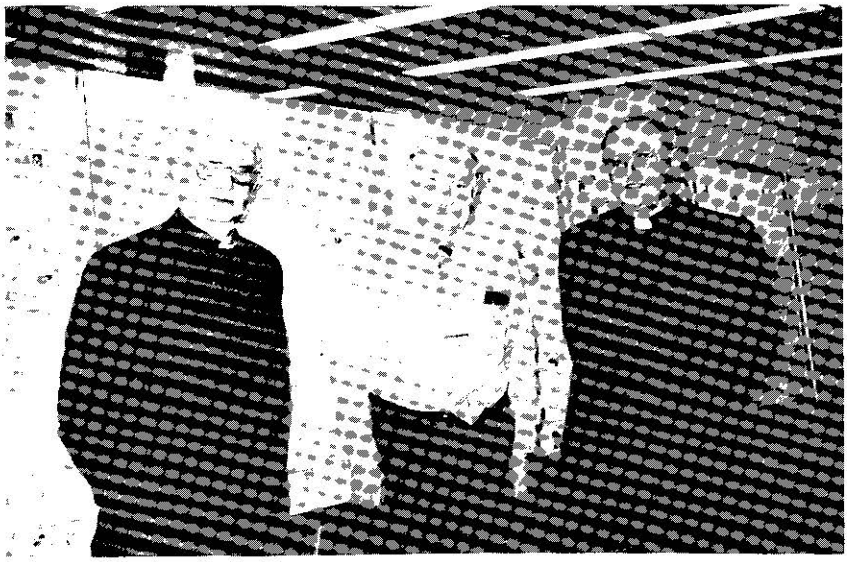
This year, on the 20th anniversary of the Pontificate of His Holiness, Polonus sponsored a Pope John Paul II Philatelic Exhibition. Shown were stamps covers and postmarks of his pastoral visits in Italy and world pilgrimages. It was held November 5-15, at the Polish Women's Alliance of America, Madam Curie Hall in Park Ridge, Illinois. All material exhibited was from the collection of member Arkadiusz Walinski.



Arkadiusz Walinski showed part of his vast collection of Pope John Paul II material.

In the first part of the exhibition of 68 frames, Walinski showed a documentation of 84 pilgrimages consisting of nearly 1200 covers cancelled in various countries visited by the pope. In the course of twenty years, he visited 117 countries (some several times), and 570 cities and localities. The second part of the exhibit, consisting of 14 frames, he displayed some 300 covers, cancelled in different Italian cities of his 134 pastoral visits to some 250 localities. The third part of the exhibit consisted of the newest issues of Vatican City, Italy and San Marino on

the occasion of the opening of the International Philatelic Exhibition, ITALIA '98 held in October in Mediola. Shown was the stamp with the pope addressing philatelists. In the same frame was a cover from 1976 autographed by Cardinal Wojtyla, plus a booklet of the latest Vatican issues personally autographed by the pope.



The Pope John Paul II Exhibition was a one man show displaying the collection of Arkadiusz Walinski (center). Among the viewers at the exhibit were the Archbishop Janusz Bolonek, Papal Nuncio in Bucharest, Roumania (left), and Monsignor Stefan Wylezek, Administrator of the John Paul II Foundation.

SŁANIA QUARTERLY ISSUED

Members of the Czesław Słania Study Group recently received the summer issue of the society's quarterly newsletter, 'Close-Up', featuring reports of new private engravings from the famous artist, and a detailed listing of stamps issued during 1997 that were engraved by Słania.

Czesław Słania is acknowledged as the most prolific stamp engraver of all time. Among the nearly 1,000 stamp engravings to his credit is the 29¢ Grace Kelly joint issue of the United States and Monaco from 1993, which Słania also designed.

Membership information about the Czesław Słania Study Group and a sample copy of the society's journal are available from Eugene Wolosiewicz, Box 1382, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

POLONUS LOSES RICHARD PODDUBIUK

After a short illness Richard Poddubiuk passed away September 30th. Although he lived in Canada he was an active member. He contributed articles to the Polonus Bulletin. We will miss him!

1929 Poznan Fair Balloon Mail

By STANLEY KRONENBERG

During the 1929 Poznań National Fair an international balloon competition took place on August 15. Philatelic mail consisting of approximately 200 letters carried by the four competing balloons required special balloon-mail stamps which were obtained by overprinting available fair propaganda letter seals.

Five kinds of lithographically printed letter seals were used for the overprinting. One kind, 15 violet with a yellow center surrounded by two blue arches, of which one overlaps with the yellow resulting in a green arch. In the center is an emblem with the Polish eagle on top. The inscription reads: "Poznań - Maj-Wrzesień - 1929 - Wystawiamy na - Powszechnej - Wystawie - Krajowej" ("Poznan, May-September 1929, We exhibit at the General National Exhibition"). The other four seals, printed in red and blue, show the National Fair Building in Poznan, a stylized Polish eagle above a large "X" and the applicable inscription in Polish, German, English or French.

The overprinting of these letter seals into balloon-mail postage stamps was made typographically; the indentations in the paper caused by this printing technique are clearly visible. The ink is an intense shiny black. The design of the overprint shows a balloon and the inscription: "MIĘDZ. ZAWODY / BALONÓW" (International Balloon Competition). No denominations are shown.

The overprint form consisted of four overprints which were only roughly copied from the original design resulting in four distinct overprint types. They are distinct in many details including the mesh on the balloon and the lettering. The easiest way to distinguish the four types is by the ropes which tie the gondola to the balloon:

Type I:

The first and second ropes are separated. The fifth rope descends from the center of the balloon's vent and is separated from the 6th rope.

Type II:

The first and the second rope touch above the gondola. The fifth rope descends from the center of the balloon's vent and joins the sixth rope at the gondola.

Type III:

There are nine instead of the usual eight ropes. Each of the three groups of three ropes converge. The fifth rope touches the balloon's vent on the left side. The short tiedown rope extending from the bottom right side of the gondola is missing.

Type IV:

The first and second ropes are close together and touch, the fourth has a break above the gondola, and the fifth touches the balloon's vent on the right side. Since I am not familiar with th sequence of these types in the overprint form, my assignment of numbers to the types is arbitrary.

The dimensions (in millimeters) of the overprint which are helpful in expertizing this issue are:

	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
Overprint height measured from top of the balloon to the bottom of the first "O" in BALONÓW"	28.3-28.4	28.8	28.4	28.6-28.7
Horizontal diameter of the balloon	11.1	11.2	11.0-11.1	11.1-11.3
Vertical diameter of the balloon	11.4	11.7	11.5	11.6-11.7
Length of "MIĘDZ. ZAWODY" (measured on top)	20.0-20.1	19.8	20.2-20.3	20.3-20.3
Length of "BALONÓW" (measured on top)	14.8-14.9	14.4	14.4-14.5	14.4-14.5

These stamps are line perforated 11½ except for those with the English text which I have seen only line perforated 11½x10¾. I have also seen a letter seal (not overprinted) with the German text line perforated 11½ x 10¾.

The paper is white and exhibits a fine regular diagonally oriented grid of translucent spots which are sometimes difficult to see. The gum is white, uniformly applied and glossy, spots of black ink used for the overprinting are often visible on the gummed side. Occasionally an entire overprint appears on the reverse in mirror image (see fig. 3); apparently the surface on which the stamps were positioned during the overprinting process was not kept clean.

The numbers of overprinted stamps were:

violet-yellow-blue	80
red and blue, Polish text	1000
red and blue, German text	1000
red and blue, French text	20
red and blue, English text	120

Of the first three stamps listed above some were made with inverted overprints. The 1972 Ruch Catalogue also reports the existence of red and blue seals with Polish text having a double overprint.

While solely philatelically motivated these stamps were issued by the National Fair Administration which was part of the Polish Government and their use was mandatory for letters flown by the competing balloons to Germany. Their philatelic status should thus be that of semi-official balloon postage stamps.

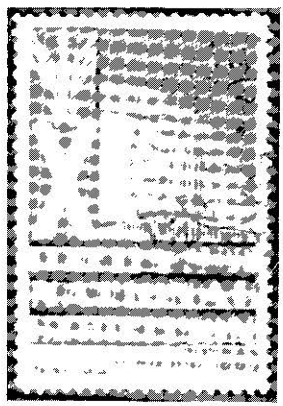


FIGURE 1:

Red and blue letter seal (not overprinted) with English text. It was used on the back of an envelope and thus bears the black arrival postmark of the New York Registry Division dated April 5, 1929.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 493-9)

81st Apostolic Journey of Pope John Paul II to Cuba

JANUARY 21-26, 1998

By ARKADIUSZ WALINSKI

The Holy Father's Pastoral visit to Cuba began on the afternoon of Wednesday, January 21st, with arrival ceremonies at Jose Marti Airport in Havana. The Holy Father was welcomed by President Fidel Castro, Church and State authorities.

On the morning of Thursday, January 22, the Holy Father flew from Havana to Santa Clara, where he celebrated an open air Mass on the sports field of the Manuel Fajardo Institute. The theme of the liturgy was the Christian values of the family in Cuban society.

On Friday morning, January 23, the Holy Father flew from Havana to Camaguey where he celebrated Mass with the young people in Ignacio Agramonte Plaza. In the evening, the Holy Father went to the University of Havana, where he met representatives of Cuba's cultural world. The visit began with a moment of prayer before the mortal remains of the Servant of God Father Felix Varela, a Cuban priest known as "the leader of Cuban teachers". (See U.S. stamp issued on September 15, 1997).

On the morning of Saturday, January 24, the Holy Father flew to Santiago de Cuba where he celebrated Mass in Antonio Maceo Plaza and crowned the statue of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, patroness of the Cuban nation. In the evening, the Holy Father went to the shrine of Saint Lazarus in El Rincon, located on the outskirts of Havana, where he presided at a prayer service with nearby leprosium patients.

On the morning of Sunday, January 25, the Holy Father attended an ecumenical meeting with representatives of the Cuban Council of Churches. The culmination of the Holy Father's Pastoral visit to Cuba was the Mass celebrated in Havana's Revolution Plaza. Numerous cardinals and bishpss from many countries concelebrated the liturgy which was attended by over a million people, including President Fidel Castro. Later the Holy Father met with the members of the Cuban Bishops' Conference following with a meeting in Havana's Immaculate Conception Cathedral with priests, religious and seminarians. In the evening after departure ceremonies at the airport, the Holy Father returned to Rome.

VATICAN: January 21, 1998

Commemorative travel postmark in Latin Pope John Paul II with hand in blessing gesture. Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Havana.

* IO. PAULUS II CUBANUM POPULUM * / PASTORALI CUM DILECTIONE VISIT / POSTE VATICANE + 21-26 GENN. 1998. /



CUBA

First Day of Issue: January 14, 1998.
Set of two stamps and souvenir sheet.

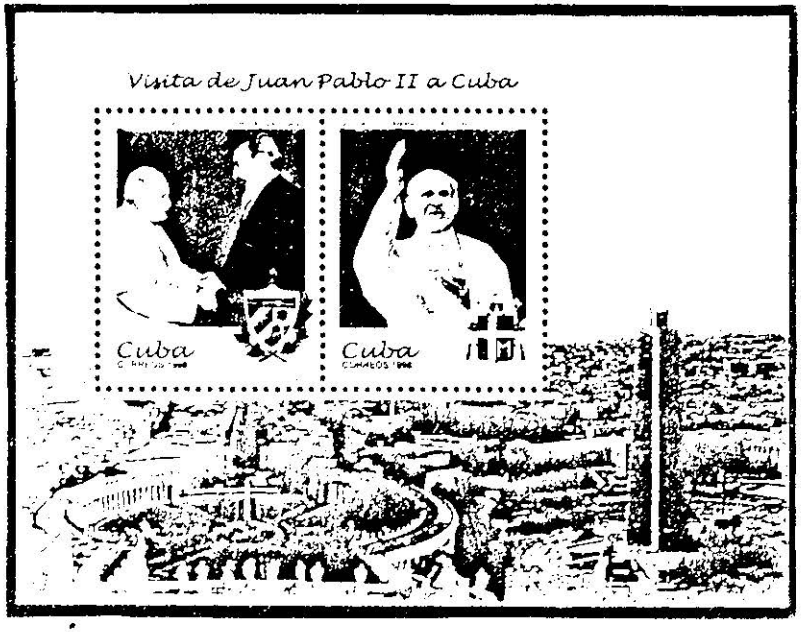


65c stamp — Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Havana. Coat of arms of Havana. Small portrait of Pope John Paul II.

75c stamps — Basilica of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, Santiago de Cuba. Coat of arms of Santiago de Cuba. Small portrait of Pope John Paul II.



Souvenir sheet — contains two 50c stamps surrounded by a large border area. On the left side of the souvenir sheet aerial view of St. Peters Plaza in the Vatican is shown. On the right side a view of Havana is shown with the 450-foot high Jose Marti Monument. One of the 50c stamps depicts Pope John Paul II shaking hands with President Fidel Castro, during his visit to the Vatican in 1996. Cuba's coat of arms is also shown in the lower right side of the stamp. The other 50c stamp depicts Pope John Paul II in greeting gesture. The papal coat of arms is shown in the lower right side of the stamp.



Havana - January 14, 1998
Commemorative First Day of of Issue postmark. Basilica of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre. VISITA DE JUAN PABLO II A CUBA. / PRIMER DIA 14-1-98 HABANA 6 /





Havana - January 14, 1998
Commemorative First Day of Issue postmark.
Exactly the same postmark as above, except different type of letters.

Havana - January 14, 1998
Commemorative First Day of Issue postmark. Used on the aerogramme. Coat of arms of the Vatican State. PRIMERA DIA / 14.ENE.1998 HABANA. VISITA DE JUAN PABLO II a CUBA





Havana - January 21, 1998

Commemorative first day of visit postmark. Facsimile of Pope John Paul II signature. VISITA DE JUAN PABLO II A CUBA / HABANA 6 / 21.ENE.1998 / PRIMER DIA.

Havana - January 21, 1998:
Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II in mitre. Aerial view of Havana. VISITA DE SU SANTIDAD / JUAN PABLO II A CUBA / LA HAVANA 21.1.1998 /





"Visit of His Holiness John Paul II to Cuba."

Havana - January 22, 1998:
Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II in mitre. President Fidel Castro. Partial view of St. Peter's Square in the Vatican. VISITA DE SU SANTIDAD / JUAN PABLO II A CUBA / LA HABANA 21.1.1998 /

Camaguey - January 23, 1998:
Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II in mitre. Map of Cuba on stylized letters Cuba VISITA DE SU SANTIDAD / JUAN PABLO II A CUBA / CAMAGUEY 23.1.1998 /





Havana - January 23, 1998:
Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II in mitre. Portrait of Father Felix Varela, national hero and a staunch defender of Cuban independence.
VISITA DE SU SANTDAD / JUAN PABLO II A CUBA /
VISITA DE SU SAN-
LA HABANA 23.1.1998 /

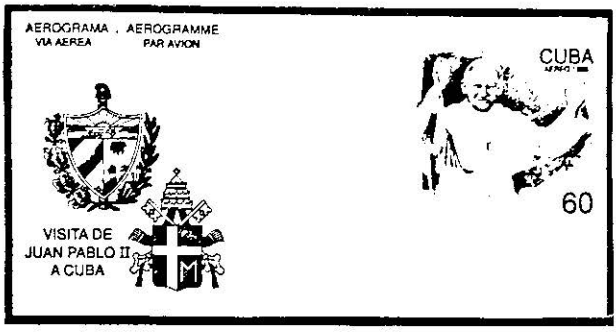
Santiago de Cuba - January 24, 1998:
Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II in mitre. Statue of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre.
VISITA DE SU SANTIDAD / JUAN PABLO II A CUBA /
SANTIAGO DE CUBA / 24.1.1998 /





Havana - January 25, 1998:
Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II in mitre. Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Havana.
VISITA DE SU SANTIDAD / JUAN PABLO II A CUBA /
LA HABANA 25.1.1998 /

AEROGRAMME — AIR LETTER



(TO BE CONTINUED)

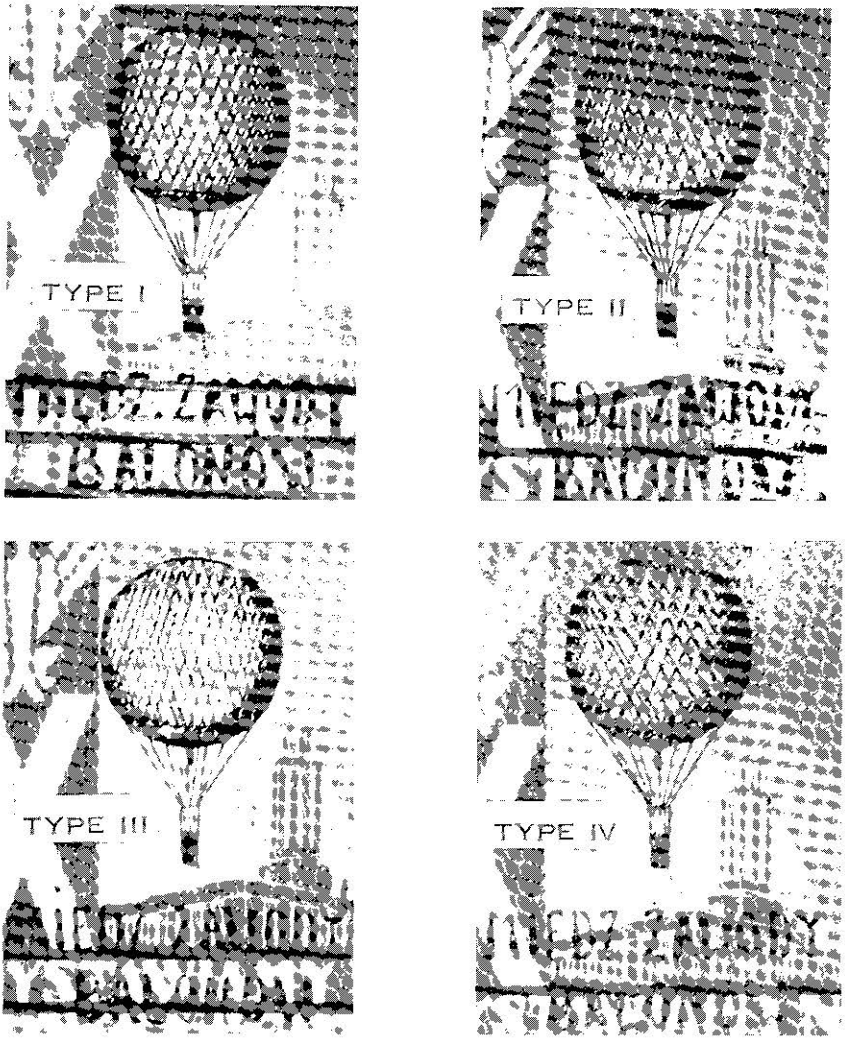


FIGURE 2:
The four types of balloon-mail overprints.

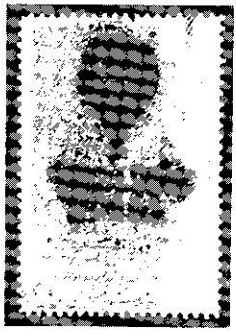


FIGURE 3:
The overprint appears in a mirror image on the gum of this red and blue stamp with Polish text.

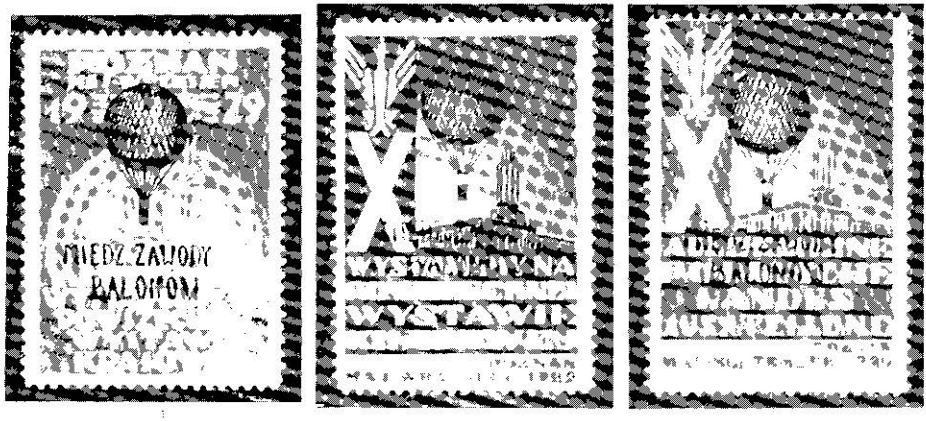


FIGURE 4:
The set of 5 balloon stamps of 1929:
violet-yellow-blue
- overprint type II
red-blue, Polish text
- overprint type I
red-blue, German text
- overprint type I
red-blue, French text
- overprint type IV
red-blue, English text
- overprint type IV



FIGURE 5:
Inverted balloon overprints:
violet-yellow-blue - overprint type II
red-blue, Polish text - overprint type III
red-blue, German text - overprint type IV

PRE-PHILATELIC COVERS
JULIAN vs GREGORIAN CALENDAR

In the Pre-Philatelic Congress Kingdom of Poland, Alexota was a frontier postal relay station for the Horse Post on the WARSAW-KOWNO Post Road and the line's terminus was located across the Nemunas River from Kowno which was not located in the Congress Kingdom of Poland but in Imperial Russia. ALEXOTA now is a suburb of Kaunas and has been inhabited since ancient times.

Alexotas, in the XIX Century was often referred to as having the longest bridge in the world. It took thirteen days to cross from Kowno to Alexota. It was true that if you left Kowno on October 1st, for example, you would arrive in Alexota on October 14th. How does one then account for this loss of 13 days in transit?!! Let's go back into calendar history and see what happened.

The original and rather impractical Roman calendar of ten months was improved upon and changed by Julius Caesar in the year 45 B.C. on the advice of the Egyptian astronomer Sosigenes who fixed the year at 365 days and the Leap Year at 366 days.

The error of 11 minutes and 14 seconds per year of this so-called Julian calendar accumulated until in 1582 the Vernal Equinox occurred on March 11th instead of on March 21st — lagging 10 days behind. In that year, 1582, Pope Gregory XIII, by Papal Bull annulled the 10 days (October 4th was followed by October 15th, 1582) and corrected the Julian calendar by the addition of certain century leap years to make up the error.

The presently accepted reformed or Gregorian calendar as instituted in 1582 was only slowly adopted throughout Europe. Not until 1752 did England officially change to the reformed calendar and also imposed it on all its possessions including the American Colonies. But by that time, 11 days had to be annulled by Royal Decree and September 2nd, 1752 was followed by September 14th. Eastern Europe and Russia adopted the Gregorian calendar only in 1918, Greece in 1923; however, some ethnic groups affiliated with the Greek Church have retained the use of the Julian Calendar, particularly for its Church Feasts and Holidays.

To change dates from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar one adds the following days: From 1582 to 1700 add 10 days
1700 to 1800 add 11 days
1800 to 1900 add 12 days
1900 to 2000 add 13 days

This explains why crossing the Nemunas River at Kaunas to Alexota in the XIX century, you lost 13 days, because in going from one side of the river to the other, you changed from the Julian calendar used in Imperial Russia to the Gregorian Calendar used in the Congress Kingdom of Poland.

This time difference must always be kept in mind when taking into consideration when interpreting the dated text of correspondence and letters and their dates of sending and receiving marks.

—Dr. James Mazepa

Lithuanian Polish Postal Route Commemorative

Lithuania released a stamp in its Postal History series October 9. This 70-centai stamp salutes the establishment of centralized postal communications between Lithuania and western Europe in the 16th century.



Lithuania commemorates the establishment in the 1500s of a postal route between the Polish and Lithuanian capitals on this Oct. 9 stamp.

The new issue announcement provides the reason behind the need for this new postal route: "Sigismund Augustus, the grand duke of Lithuania and the king of Poland, was quite a rare visitor in the (Polish) capital Cracow.

"His love for the beautiful widow, Barbara Radvilaite and public affairs did not let him leave Vilnius. So it appeared necessary to establish regular and effective post communications between Cracow and Vilnius."

Regular scheduled postal delivery between the capitals started in 1562. It took seven days for a letter to reach Vilnius from Cracow. The service was so expensive, though, that only the king, feudal lords and rich merchants could use it.

The new stamp depicts a postal rider with his post horn. Buildings of the two cities are pictured in the background. The post horn emblem of the Lithuanian post office appears in the upper-right corner of the stamp.

H. Ratkevicius designed this stamp. The Spindulys printing house in Kaunas, Lithuania, printed 500,000 copies of it in sheets of 50.

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LITHPEX

LITHPEX XXVII, the annual stamp show of the Lithuanian Philatelic Society, was held October 23-25 at Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago. Participating in the show were Fred Szebel who received a silver award for Grunwald and Chester Schafer who also got a silver for his First Isuue of Independent Poland — 1918.

The Polonus Philatelic Society is a Not-for-Profit Organization incorporated in the State of Illinois (1939). The opinions expressed by authors of articles appearing therein, do not necessarily reflect the views of Polonus Philatelic Society.

Annual dues, which include a subscription to the Bulletin are $16.00 (U.S. currency only) and should be sent to the Polonus Treasurer, P.O. Box 458, Berwyn, IL 60402. Membership dues are payable by December 31st. for the next calendar year. New members will receive all the 'Bulletins' for the year in which they join. Changes of address, problems with receiving the Bulletin, should be addressed to: Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 458, Berwyn, IL 60402. General matters pertaining to the Society, contribution of articles for the Bulletin, complaints or other matters should be directed to the President.