

BULLETIN OF THE **POLONUS** PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets Every 2nd & 4th Fri. at Jan Beyzym Memorial House, 6965 Belmont, Chicago

Issue No. 315

Price 40c

October, 1973

A VISIT TO "POLSKA 73"

By ALFRED SZEBEL

We left Chicago on August 9, arriving in Warsaw on a Polish Lot flight the next day before noon. After custom formalities, we were on our own in Poland. This visit was my first since I left Poland 28 years ago. After a few days in beautiful Warsaw, we went our ways, meeting again in Poznań for the opening of the POLSKA 73 International Exhibition.

The opening of POLSKA 73 was impressive with orchestras, dignitaries and splendor of the old world. From the beginning, the Copernicus Pavillion, commonly called "The American", because it had the official U.S. Moon Letter exhibit and the U.S. Postal Service exhibit with Mr. W. Zachariasiewicz in charge. This Pavillion was the center of interest during the duration of



Photo taken at reception given by the U.S. Consulate in Poznan. (Left to right:) W. Poniecki, U.S. Consulate official (name unknown), W. Zachariasiewicz—in charge of U.S. Pavillion, Alfred Szebel, and Z. Obrapalski—Vice Chairman of POLSKA 73.



Entrance to POLSKA 73 with flags of nations participating in the exhibition.

POLSKA 73 and gave U.S.A. the utmost publicity thru the distribution to the visitors of the official U.S. Postal Service Copernicus Souvenir sheets free of charge.

POLSKA 73 was a giant exhibition, second in the world only to Praha 68. A total of 6,300 frames or over 100,000 album pages were exhibited in several Poznań Fair Pavillions. To view all the exhibits would take at least two weeks, so the visitor of a few days had to be selective in what he viewed.

The Polish Post Office operated many stations in various pavillions. Over 12 different commemorative cancellations were in use, and special stationery, stamps and souvenir sheets were on sale.

The POLSKA 73 organizing committee with Jan Witkowski, did a fantastic job. The International jury and foreign guests were entertained with theatre presentations, receptions, trips,

etc. during the POLSKA 73 exhibit. Many seminars, meetings and discussions of prominent philatelists from all over the world took place.

During my two visits to the POLSKA 73 exhibition, I met about 20 Polonus members, mostly from the U.S.A., Canada, Italy, England, Germany and Poland. There were: J. P. Rux, Frank Wolosewick, Józef Migala, W. Poniecki and N. Zbyszewski of Chicago; J. Haniewicz and J. Kucharski of New York; J. Po-dejko and Dr. M. A. Kamiński of Canada, M. Fuszara and T. Skotnicki of Buffalo; Dr. Nino Barberis of Italy; M. Bojanowicz of England; R. Ritter from Germany and Dr. M. Lipiński and T. Gryżewski of Poland.

On August 28th, just before lectures of Polonus members, Dr. Kamiński of Canada and M. Bojanowicz of England, Alfred Szebel, as official representative of Polonus, presented a

(Continued on page 315-7)

(Continued from previous month)

POSSIBLE: 10 SIMPLE AND 90 COMPOUND PERFS.
25 mks WORN PLATE, 100 mks ON THICK WOVE,
300 mks. & 500 mks ON THIN WOVE.

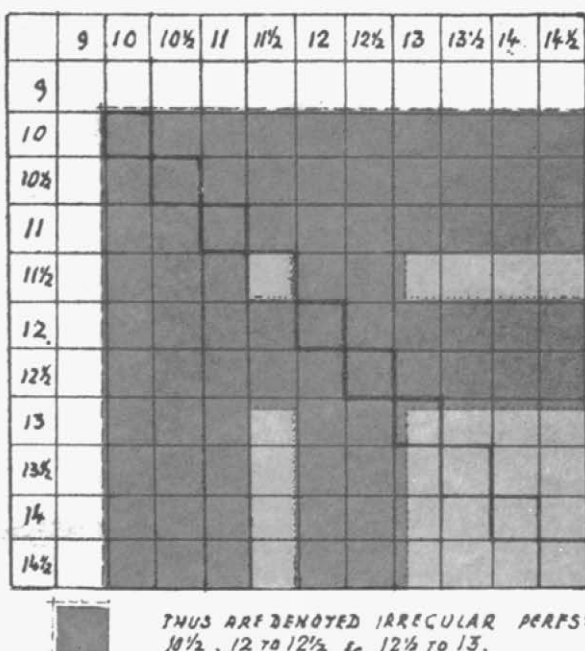


FIG. 7

DASHES INDICATE THE LIMIT OF POSSIBLE PERFS.

the perforation process and are replaced by one or two other machines with different gauges. In the case of one machine being withdrawn it can be observed often, but the withdrawal of two machines is very rare.

In the first case we will achieve measurements like these: $12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$; and in the second case: $13\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 9$. But measurements: $12 \times 13\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ are misleading and should not be considered as a mixed perforation due to the fact that perf. 12 and $12\frac{1}{2}$ are irregular and are made by the same perforator. The mixed perf. is scarce.

(2) COMB and HARROW PERFORATIONS and STANDARDIZATION

Comb Perforation

Two new comb perforating machines, with the same gauge — $11\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ (11.5×11.7), were used on Large Eagles since January, 1923. They did not belong to the sets transferred from Vienna. These machines were perforated: 100 mks. on thick wove paper, 200 mks. on thin and thick wove paper, 300, 500, 1000 and 2000 mks. on thin wove paper.

Harrow Perforation

The harrow regular and rotary perforating machine was used the first time in 1922. Gauge $12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ (12.6×12.5).

FIG. 8

POSSIBLE: 8 SIMPLE AND
56 COMPOUND PERFS.

200 MKS. ON THIN & THICK WOVE, 1000 MKS &
2000 MKS ON THIN WOVE.

	9	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½
9											
10											
10½											
11											
11½											
12											
12½											
13											
13½											
14											
14½											



THUS ARE DENOTED IRREGULAR PERFS.
10½, 12 TO 12½, 12½ TO 13

DASHES INDICATE THE LIMIT OF POSSIBLE PERFS.

It was imported from abroad and joined to the rotary printing machine, creating one process, instead two. But the perforating process involved technical difficulties. To avoid complicating the efficiency of the machine, pelure paper was used during the production. Due to the financial situation of the country, the quantity of pelure paper, imported from abroad, was restricted. The Polish Printing Works attempted to carry out the contract by using paper manufactured in Poland. This proved to be a failure as we can verify from the harrow perforation used on the 200 mks. with thick wove paper. To identify them with certainty is difficult

and we have only seen a few of these and therefore consider them as rare. The sizes of the 200 mks. are 31 mm. x 26 mm. The denominations of 300, 400, 500 and 2000 mks. are 30 mm. x 25 mm. This would be possible if the machine had removable pins.

The sizes of the sheets of 100 stamps of the last 4 denominations are (from center to center of perforation) — 300 mm. horizontally by 255 mm. vertically. A sheet is divided by narrow spaced gutter (average width - 2.5 mm.) into two 50 stamps sheets with 5.5 mm. gutters horizontally and 4 mm. gutters vertically.

Standardization

The introduction of comb and harrow perforations created a necessity for the standardization of image sizes. The original image size was 28.5 mm. x 23.3 mm. with the gutters 2.5 mm. and 3.5 mm. all round. By first employing two comb machines, the image was cut off by 1 mm. (vertically and horizontally), by squeezing the background, then the gutters extended up to 3.5 mm. and 4.5 mm. Two denominations were affected: the 100 and 200 mks. During this phase the Polish Printing Works made experimental trials with harrow rotary perforation on thick wove paper.

The second phase of standardization brought a further cutting of the image to 26 mm. x 20.5 mm., thus increasing the gutters size to 6 mm. all round except those stamps perforated by the rotary process. The second phase involved the 300, 500, 1000 and 2000 mks. value.

The increase in the gutter size was caused by the reaction of the humidity on the paper. The wet printing had small influence. The main problem was created by changeable degree of humidity outside and inside of the building where the actual production was in process. Henry Archer had a similar problem in England during his experiments with his first perforating machine in 1850. Of course all depended on the quality of the paper used. This was the fundamental reason why pelure paper had been adopted during the harrow perforation. Pelure paper had a greater degree of resistance against humidity.

These comb and harrow perforations introduced at the beginning of 1923 must be regard-

ed as the first step towards normalization of the perforation process. The line perforators were relegated to one side, but still were not excluded entirely. Line perforators were used on all denominations of the 1923 February issue (except for the 400 mks.). We think, this standardization was in the main due to the fact that Poland, at this time, could not produce a better quality paper.

(3) RARITY and SCARCITY

The problem of the degree of rarity of the stamps we are dealing with is, due to the lack of proper documents, very difficult to grasp. This must be set against the background of quantity issued which means that if we are talking about rarity of perforation, we must bear in mind the proportion between the specimens and the total sum of the stamps perforated. An approximate calculation is that 500 million stamps of 9 denominations of Large Eagles were issued.

We present two lists which are arranged according to degree of rarity or scarcity. We have based them on our investigations and the investigation of other philatelists and on our judgement of the possibility of rarity or scarcity in each case. Of course, we understand, that on this kind of basis it could be controversial, but it is easy to change the order of the lists, if any one could present a different or otherwise sound evidence for changing the order as we have enunciated.

We mention only the specimens which we have seen.

Rarity

1) Line perforation. All used stamps partly imperforated or

double perforated. Bearing in mind, that during the process approximately 20 sheets were perforated at a time. Any mistake therefore would only affect these 20 sheets of stamps, this reflected on the total number of stamps perforated.

2) Line perforation. All mint stamps partly imperforated or double perforated for above mentioned reasons. But there is an element of suspicion, the faulty perforations could have been produced deliberately.

3) Line perforation. Compound perf. 13 x 9 — 25 mks. printed on thin wove paper and thick bluish wove paper.

4) Comb perforation. Vertical se-tenant of staggered perforation. (see fig. No. 9).



FIG. 9. Staggered Perf.

5) Harrow porfuration. — 200 mks. on thick wove paper.

6) Line perforation — 14½ gauge on 500mks.

Scarcity

1) Line perforation. All mixed perforation.

2) Line perforation — 9 gauge on thick bluish wove, on 25 mks.

3) Line Perforation — 9 gauge on thin wove, on 25 mks.

4) Line perforation — 14 gauge in vertical position on all values except 50, 200, 400, 1000 and 2000 mks.

5) Line perforation — 14½ gauge similar to 14 gauge as for values.

(4) MAIN CHARACTERISTIC OF PERFORATION

In the Polish Mark Period the financial position of Poland was hazardous, there was not a sufficient reserve of gold or hard currency to cover the issue of banknotes. For the enormous expenditure involved with the war against Russia, the Polish Government was compelled to print more paper currency, in consequence the Polish Mark depreciated. The best example of the currency depreciation were for postal charges on inland letters:

from Dec. 6, 1918 letters to 20 grams cost 25 Fenigi (¼ of mk.)

from Dec. 1, 1923 letters to 20 grams cost 25,000 mks.

We must however point out that on the 28th of April, 1924, a new currency based on złoty was introduced equal to 100 groszy. The relationship between the Polish Mark and the Złoty was based as 1 zł. being equal to 1,800,000 Polish Marks. (One Pound Sterling approx. 25 zł. or one U.S.A. dollar just over 5 zł.)

In such circumstances the Polish Printing Works had a difficult task, the problem of adjusting the production of stamps to the rapid depreciation of currency was difficult to cope with. To prepare a new design required time and the only solution was to print more and more stamps from the existing printing plates, even the stamps of low value. As a result some letters required half a sheet of stamps to defray postage.

In all there were three phases to the production of these stamps. 1st — printing, 2nd — gumming, and 3rd—perforating. All these phases had to be synchronized.

(To be continued)

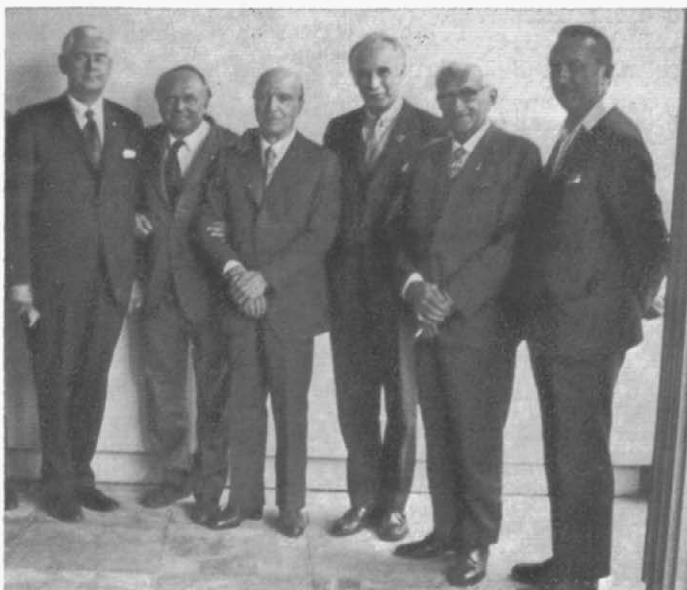


Photo taken after lectures given by Dr. Miet Kamienski of Canada and M. A. Bojanowicz of England. (Lef to right:) Dr. M. Kamienski, J. Ryblewski, President of Polski Zw. Filat. Z. Hampel, M. Bojanowicz, M. Perzynski and F. Bura.

few philatelic organizations and prominent Polish philatelists with specially prepared Copernicus Year albums for their contributions to Polish philately. The Albums were also given to a few Museums as a permanent record of Polonus' contribution to the Copernicus 500th Anniversary celebrations.

From the Polonus members exhibiting at POLSKA 73, the following won recognition:

Gilded Medal: Dr. J. Kuderewicz

Silver Medals: Dr. M. Kamieński, J. Kucharski, J. Podejko, Z. Wagrowski, Dr. J. Kudere-wicz, Z. Włodarski.

Silver Plated Medals: A. Szebel, Dr. J. Kuderewicz, W. Ponle-cki.

Bronze Medal: C. P. Straub.

Diplomas: L. Pieczara, T. Mala-nowski.

COPERNICANA 500

The Polish Philatelic Society of Canada will present an inter-national philatelic exhibition COPERNICANA 500 on Novem-ber 3rd and 4th, 1973 at Saint Casimir Auditorium in Vancou-ver, B.C. The exhibition is part of the B.C. Copernicus celebra-tion on the 500th anniversary of the birth of Copernicus. A com-memorative label, postcards and envelopes will be issued. Special-ly engraved medallions will be awarded by the judges for best collections. The exhibition will carry a numismatic section with a display of the Millennium of Polish Coins.

The P.P.S.C. is a relatively new Canadian society with over 50 members. It publishes a ma-gazine "Hejnał" with articles in the Polish and English langua-ges. Thus far three editions of the magazine have appeared.

For membership applications write to their President, Józef Podejko, 510 St. George Street, New Westminster, B.C., Canada.

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— Annual Dues are \$4.00 —

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, November 9th, 1973:

Program Meeting. Bud Hennig will speak on his award winning collection of Danzig. Meeting begins at 8:00 p.m. Beeba to follow.

Friday, November 23rd, 1973:

Business Meeting.

Friday, December 14th, 1973:

Program Meeting. Stamps For The Wounded Nite.

ŚWIATOWA WYSTAWA FILATELISTYCZNA POLSKA 73

Copernicus
1473-1973

POZNAN, POLSKA
19. 8 - 2. 9 1973



8cUS



Karta niniejsza została wydana z okazji Światowej Wystawy Filatelistycznej w Poznaniu zorganizowanej celem uczczenia pięćsetlecia urodzin genialnego astronoma epoki Odrodzenia, Mikołaja Kopernika.

Przedstawia ona 8-centowy znaczek pamiątkowy Poczty Stanów Zjednoczonych wydany 23 kwietnia 1973 roku oraz dwa pamiątkowe znaczki Kopernikowskie Poczty Polskiej.

L. J. Keenan

Postmaster General

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Special sheets issued by the U.S. Postal Service for POLSKA 73. This one bears two of the special exhibition cancellations.