



## Did You Know?



### January 1995

- ☞ During the investigation into that 'Tiefenbach' letter (see Newsletter, January 1994) several members found a 'Tiefenbach' on the Furka Pass, and a cancel was shown in the May 1994 issue. Apparently this PO was in a restaurant on the pass, as a recent newspaper report says that it has burnt down, but had been unused for years.
- ☞ Only the annual 'Escalade' festivities in Geneva had an MPO cachet this year. Is this the last? In 1602 the Savoyard tried to take Geneva by storm, but were defeated after violent street fighting during the night of 11-12th December (see Z.598).
- ☞ A commemorative plaque has been erected to Alexandre Yersin in his home town of Rougemont, 100 years after he discovered the cause of plague, in Hong Kong. In 1971 he was shown on Z.498. According to the NZZ he has also been portrayed on a 1945 French Indo-China stamp.
- ☞ The third Sport stamp of 1992 sold only 4.06m; the first in 1986 sold 13m, and the second in 1989 5.6m, so that the PTT and the Sports organisations have decided not to continue with a 3-year cycle; perhaps in 1996 with the Olympic Games and the Swiss Federal Gymnastics.
- ☞ The new K-cancel for Oberkulm gives the date of its founding (i.e. first mention in writing) as MCCXCV. Roman numerals are seldom used; the only other K-cancel I've found is of Staufen (K 616, 1974) which mentions 'XV cent., stained glass windows'. Perhaps there are more.
- ☞ As far as I can see the Zumstein Specialised Catalogue does not mention coil stamps unless they have a number on the back (i.e. every 5th stamp), or have a join where they have been laid up by hand from counter sheets. However, to satisfy bulk mailers, the PTT has produced rolls of 10 000 stamps, and these I always mention here.

The 40c Escalade and the 50c Postman come to mind. Now I see that the 45c Ship mail, Z.737, can also be bought from some dealers in strips of eleven. This is the proof that the stamps come from coils and not from sheets having a width of only ten stamps. These stamps on cover are usually torn and miscut. The Specialised should list them.

- ☞ This popular 45c rate for 50g letters in bulk from 3000 to 50 000 will change on the 1st January 1995 to 48c. Will the junk mailers go back to the old 50c rolls? It will be interesting to see.
- ☞ The PTT sells, at airports and some Philatelic Counters, an unlisted attractive booklet in English and Japanese for SFr.22. It contains mainly mint farmyard stamps.
- ☞ In 1992 the 'Société Philatélique de Nyon' produced a comprehensive booklet on the cancellations of the region. Unfortunately, as is usual, such important publications are kept virtually secret until discovered by accident. Another example is a booklet for Chateau d'Oex and environs, also in 1992, both in French. From Zumstein, Bern.
- ☞ For reason unknown, the PTT, on 5.12.94 replaced all 'Bern 1 Annahme' cancellers with 'Bern 1 Schanzenpost Schalter' (Fig. 1 & 2). Schalter, i.e. counter, is something quite new. About 60 cancellers have been replaced and include hand rollers and PP (Fig. 3-5). 'Briefversand' cancellers on machines have not been changed.



Figures 1 & 2



Figures 3 - 5















## Did You Know?



### February 1995

-  A book published in 1978 has just turned up in the PTT Library (BID) on the postal history of Klosters and the Prättigau, by Hans Minsch, 221 pages in German with illustrations.
  
-  A publicity machine slogan is being used in Sion 1 for an event that may never happen. The Valais is trying to get the Winter Olympics for 2002. The slogan shows text in French, German, English and what is called 'New-German', that is an English word like "supporter" is used as if it is German There are hundreds of such words in common use today.
  
-  Jann Etter has again published his annual analysis of all Swiss and UN Geneva postmarks, namely 173, showing no increase over 1993.
  
-  The SVPS has published in their December 1994 bulletin a list of 237 places which have used, or are still using the 'Black R' Registration labels, type 7. There are certainly more, have you any?
  
-  Due to global warming short blue trousers will be issued, optionally, to postmen in summer. Girls have had split skirts since 1992.
  
-  Heiner Durst has just published a 50-page brochure on the history of the business franking machines, 1884 to 1928, in German.
  
-  When a 50c stamp is used for the bulk mailing of 3000 - 50 000 pieces, instead of the required 48c, the PTT repay the 2c difference.
  
-  With the new rates from 1st January 1995 the rules for the cheaper foreign 'book post' have been tightened up, to exclude all PTT publications on new rates etc.
  
-  To me, only the 60c Swiss wrestling stamp, of the set of four commemoratives, is worth the paper it is printed on.
  
-  Liechtenstein will no longer issue 'Service' or 'Official' stamps when current stocks are used up. First issued in 1932, their abolishment is now a belated step in the right direction.
  
-  The Brienz-Rothorn Bahn has had such success with its old-timer steam engine (with diesel oil fuel) that another has been ordered from SLM, who have also orders for three from Austria.
  
-  The PTT has decided that 1616 Post Offices (of 3688) are not profitable; therefore about 500 will be incorporated into the village shop, à la England. We will see how this revolutionary idea works out. On the 1st of June a dozen will go on trial, they will be offering more services than the present 'Postannahmestellen'.
  
-  For the new issues of 7th March 1995 two FD cancels will be used, and that one of them breaks all tradition by breaking the outer circle, to give more freedom for the Basel Dove. A neat idea.
  
-  The controversial 60c Stop Aids stamp was sold out, in sheet form, in 2 months, unprecedented.



## Did You Know?



### March 1995

- Biel 1 has had the latest type of coding and sorting installation put into service in November 1994 following several weeks of trials; Basel 2 is also being up-dated. In these two places, and in Geneva, a new method of printing the operator's personal number has been applied. AEG, of Constance very often try out their new systems in Switzerland before introducing them to other, bigger, customers.
- Felix Winterstein is having his collection of postcards and other official documents presented in the PTT Museum from 7th March to 28th May 1995. This ties up with the money order used as the illustration on the special postcard for the GABRA exhibition. Certainly well worth a visit.
- It is becoming very noticeable that an increasing number of stamps are being damaged as the degree of mechanisation rises. If a stamp is not perfectly stuck down, a corner will be torn off. The new PVA gum is easily washed off by enthusiastic licking, and then a protruding corner is scrubbed off as the cover whizzes through the machinery. Will this affect the price of used stamps in future?
- At the recent Art and Antiques show in Zürich, Corinphila showed a Blue Mauritius, flown in from its private owner in Hamburg. Several other dealers showed special stamp-collections once again. A good idea to interest the general public, and others, in this way.
- According to usually reliable sources rumour has it that Bernadette Baltis, the very successful graphic artist from Zürich, has designed the block for the Basler Taube 95 exhibition, I am sure it will be popular.
- Once again Gottfried Honegger of 8716 Schmerikon has produced a wonderful catalogue of Swiss classic stamps. He includes a valuable list of letters sent during 1850-51 from senders' cancellation to destination.

Without trying to be complete he says how useful a computer is for such work, which is, in any case, never finished. Four pages in chronological order; hundreds of full-colour illustrations. Order direct.

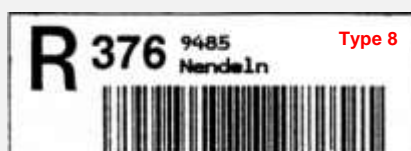
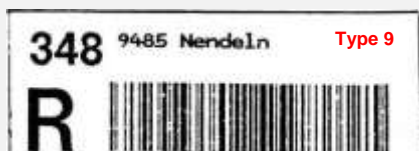
- According to Markus Seitz of Luzern there will be the first special ATM for the Basel 95 exhibition. Five Frama vending machines will be in service, and labels will be on sale only during the exhibition. He also reports that experiments are advanced to produce a decent picture, and the value will be printed in black. It would not be possible to use the new paper with red value marks, and vice versa. We will see what it looks like, but when?
- I have been asked to explain the military cancellation 'Hilfsfeldpost'. This is just the old way of spelling "Hilfs..." meaning auxiliary field post office, i.e., when the normal units were overloaded, say during manoeuvres.



On the left is shown a rare cancel, recently discovered, and on the right a French language equivalent.



- Something curious has happened in Liechtenstein, a new type of bar-coded R-label, see below. This would be type 9. The second example shows the 'old' type 8. Is this a one-off or only in Liechtenstein, or will it spread into Switzerland?





## Did You Know?



### April 1995

- ☞ The Philatelic Service has just issued the first of a new publication, so new in fact that I can't find out the English title. In four separate languages, this replaces the old A5 booklet on each stamp issue. With 20 A4 pages it goes into much greater detail of each stamp issue than was previously possible. The first issue covers the Basler Taube 95 exhibition block, the two Europa and the four Pro Patria stamps as well as the special 'Junaphilex' postcard.

The first special ATM (Frama) stamp is shown and this can only be obtained at five machines on the PTT stand during the Basel show from 17th to 25th June. The paper and size remain the same - the green maps background.



- ☞ The PTT sell a large range of so-called 'pins' (as does every other organisation), showing postal coaches, places, stamps and other things. Now you can have a map of Switzerland divided into the 12 postal regions (I to XII) for SFr.88 the set of 12.
- ☞ The well-known philatelist Paola Vollmeier CPhH (Consilium Philateliae Helveticae) has edited a fabulous set of five volumes covering the period 1724 to 1849, in which the foreign postal agreements are reproduced on A3-size paper, 2334 pages. These are held in the Zürich Cantonal Archives as Zürich was the official address of the Swiss Federation during the 300 years before the French invaded.
- ☞ In its February issue, the BBZ, without comment, reproduces the official quantities of stamps sold from the 1992 Sport stamp to the 1993 Pro Juventute issue.

Dr Jann Etter in the NZZ does comment, as follows: although the number of stamps sold has dropped, the amount realised from the surcharge has risen, for both the Pro Patria and Pro Juventute. Who can explain why the two 60c PP stamps sold 4.5m of the 'earring' but only 2.7m of the 'glass bottle'? There was hardly any difference in the numbers sold of the two 60c PJ stamps.

The special 80+20c Luzern Kapell Bridge stamp reached only 1.88m. The third Sport stamp 50+20c reached only 4.07m; it was doomed to failure as the letter rate went up to 60c five months after issue.

- ☞ An interesting exhibition was held in the Zürich Fraumünsterpost during February. John Schneider showed more than 300 postcards on ten frames, to celebrate 125 years of Swiss postcards. Virtually all types were shown, including private issues.
- ☞ At the same time the Philatelic Office showed eight frames of children's efforts in designing stamps (a cantonal competition), many were excellent, and in nearly all one could recognise what the theme was at first glance.
- ☞ The PTT have let me know that three named TPO cancels will be withdrawn on 28th May, namely Bern-Schwarzenburg, Rapperswil-Goldau, and Gossau-Appenzell. This leaves only eight, plus the SBB & Rhätische Bahn.
- ☞ The new type of R-label mentioned in last month's DYK has now been found in a number of places in Switzerland, so it looks like this is going to be the new Type 9, with lower 'R'. That means that Type 8 will be rare one day, but not as rare as Type 7.



## Did You Know?



### 📖 May 1995

- ☞ At last, Soldier Stamps are acceptable at Swiss philatelic exhibitions, under section 10 Special Aspects. The first two, created by Fred Bieri in June 1915, were purely commemorative, but thereafter the money gathered was for social help for the families in financial trouble, as the Swiss soldier's pay was only for his tobacco, not for his family.

This persisted during the Second World War and many families were soon in trouble. This is part of the explanation for the flood of such stamps; in fact it had to be reduced to nearly zero by the military as it had become the main activity for many units in 1942. Although having no postal use in any way, genuinely used covers are sought after now, and this will increase.

- ☞ Only 153 Swiss postmen were bitten by dogs during 1994, following a steady reduction from the 219 cases in 1985. Could it be that the postmen are biting back?

- ☞ A new label has appeared, for 'Arrival Receipt' for registered items. In dull orange strips of ten. PTT No.236.03 (133 354) had a first print run in May 1994 of 300 000, but only recently have I seen one used on cover.



Before this 'AR' was stamped in black or a handwritten 'A' was put before the R label itself. This service costs an additional SFr.2 to the usual SFr.4 for registration. If the addressee is required to sign personally it costs an additional SFr.3. Foreign letters cost the same (see the figure below).

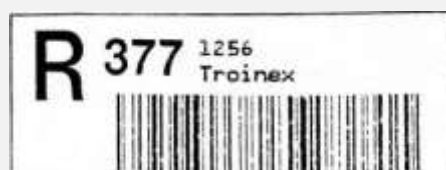
- ☞ Our active member in Boston USA has won a silver award at the March 1995 SCOPEX in Pennsylvania with his 90-sheet exhibit on 'Swiss Priority Mail', and a special Modern Postal History award ( for philatelic presentation of waste paper basket material). Guess who? Charles LaBlonde.

- ☞ Peter Stierli has published a 120 page book, A4, in German, on the History of the Posts of the Suhr Valley, which runs south of Aarau to the Aargau cantonal border. Not a part of the country seen by many tourists, but he brings alive the story of the tiny villages with the history of their postal services from Roman times.

All cancels used are shown; practically all past and present PO's also. Although the last coach Schöftland-Aarau is pictured on the 19th of November 1901, when the train line opened, there is also a picture of the first horse-drawn post coach leaving Schöftland for Staffelbach in 1913. This coach ran until 1924.

- ☞ The new Type 9 'R' label shown in the March Newsletter has been spotted from Winterthur to Genève via Bern (seven in total) so it looks likely to become universal. Slightly more room is available for longer place names with the 'R' in the lower position. The bar code is part of a world-wide system and consists of: the service (e.g., R letter, EMS), three-digit number shown on the label, a five-digit code number for the place and department, and then CH for Switzerland. The code itself is the same as that used in big stores for jam!

- ☞ The Type 7 'R' label, with black 'R' instead of in red has been reported only from 247 places to the SVPS, so can be considered the rarest of the three new types. Where will be the first place to use all three versions?





## Did You Know?



### June 1995

- ☞ For the first time, I think, a non-Swiss, at least an Anglo-Saxon, has been chosen to be a jury member for an International Exhibition, our active member from Boston USA has the honour and the responsibility for the Basler Taube 95. Congratulations.
- ☞ In time for this major event, a number of interesting books will be published. The most important is 'Der Briefpostverkehr Schweiz-Ausland', 448 pages in German (also partly in English), 300 coloured and 200 black & white illustrations, by Richard Schafer, at CHF 265. Everything is covered from 1459 to 1907 concerning foreign postage rates etc. An absolute must for all serious collectors.
- ☞ Also issued at the above event will be 'Zack 2', for foreign rates but from 1875 (UPU) until now. Priced at CHF 16, it also contains an update of volume 1, the inland rates. A must for everyone.
- ☞ Another 'official' book is 'Basler Taube' on the Basel Dove, in four languages, CHF 28,50 with 24 coloured pictures and a facsimile of the 15-stamp block, also an exhibition block, authors Jean-Paul Bach and Felix Winterstein. All available from Marken Müller, Basel.
- ☞ Also from this firm comes a book about the famous artist and stamp designer Hans Erni of Luzern. With 320 pages, in German, all his works, cancels, FDCs, medals and other things are shown, for CHF 85.
- ☞ Zumstein is publishing a book on the Swiss Hotel Posts by Marcel Kottelat, in German for CHF 190-, 200 pages, with over 100 coloured illustrations and 20 odd black & white.
- ☞ In the April and May issues of the BBZ there is a most interesting and detailed study of the printing of the Basel Dove, by Max Hertsch, and Hans Hunziker who died before he could finish his plating of the 40-stamp sheets. All known tips are given for practically all stamps to be plated correctly. Members with strips or blocks can check them and probably help to complete the picture. Reply direct to Zumstein.
- ☞ The April issue of the SBZ is devoted to all possible connections between stamps and doves; by various authors.
- ☞ St Gallen has updated its letter mechanisation with the acquisition of a new NEC (Japanese) CFC, having a 28mm dia. crown, and also on about the 25th April, an improved AEG reader, coder and sorter, with eight desks for ILV operation. Apparently Luzern will follow, and Aarau will receive new equipment.
- ☞ The PTT Museum has now become a 'Foundation', to keep it neutral during the break-up of the various sections of the PTT. I wonder if the Library will follow.

- ☞ My eye was caught by two machine cancels having a clever twist to them. From Lausanne for 100 years of the National Library (in Bern) where the '8' and the '9' are run into each other; the same



slogan will be used in Bern, in German. The other shows the slogan for 100 years of the Basel Public Transport System, where the '100' is "hidden" in the word 'Joor', which is Basel dialect for 'Jahr', i.e., Year.



- ☞ The third item I found shows nicely the habit of sticking 'vertical' stamps incorrectly 'horizontally' on letters. The artists should be informed of this practice.





## Did You Know?



### July 1995

☞ The first day of the Basler Taube 95 was hectic: queue to get in (CHF 6); queue to buy covers and cards at Organiser's stand and at PTT desks (ten); queue to get the new special Framas (at five machines, which survived 8 hours each of continuous operation); queue to sit down to stick it all together; queue to get an autogram from Bernadette Baltis (designer of the block); then the longest queue to get the correct cancel; over an hour was usual.

This was because of the FD of the Frama special and that the Berri cancellation was on this day only. At times a traditional drum and fife band was playing in the same confined space!

☞ Despite the general interest in the new Framas there was no publicity at the PTT desks on the material for sale, i.e., the FDCs, mint covers, mint and cancelled sets of the three values. They had only the conventional stamps on show.

☞ I hope to see something of the exhibits during the next week. Of course I met a number of HPS and AHPS members too, and that is most important.

☞ The PTT Museum is showing until the 20th August, paintings by Renée-Paule Danthine in which a mint stamp plays a key role. Similar paintings by the 'Studio Bertschi' were also to be seen in the foyer of Basler Taube 95, but here the stamps had all been cancelled, appropriately, on the finished painting. A new art form or a new way to collect stamps?

☞ The Swiss Thematic Club has published two books for Basler Taube 95, both in German; '*Basel im Spiegel der Philatelie*' and an additional volume to their '*Motiv-Handbuch*' which illustrates and describes all Swiss stamps up to 1990. The new volume updates to the present. Both books are well worth having.

☞ The 'Friends of the Mesocco Railway' (which closed about 20 years ago) have made a start to get it running again, at least for special trips from Castione to Cama. They have issued an attractive cover and card for the first such trip on 3/4th June.

☞ For the first time (I think) the UPU in Bern 15 ran a philatelic exhibition, from 16-18th May, to commemorate 50 years VE Day, by showing stamps and covers arranged by the Russian Federation, White Russia and the Ukraine. Pity I missed it, on holiday.

☞ The Postcode booklets have been re-issued, the numerical one is the same, but the alphabetical now includes the distribution code according to the streets in the 17 largest cities only. Previously in a separate booklet. Free at PO's.

☞ The PTT Philatelic offices are now selling some Lighthouse albums. Also a beginner's tool kit for the young collector.

☞ Once again the PTT are running a 'Best Stamp' competition for 1994/1995, entries at Basler Taube 95 by 25th June.

☞ New 'Change of Address' postcards, freepost, can be had in sets of five, each with a different overprint design in yellow.



## Did You Know?



### August 1995

- ☞ There were red faces in the PTT officialdom when it was brought to their notice (not by me) that on the special one-day cancellation - 17. JUNI 95 - they spelt the name incorrectly, i.e. with a 'Y' instead of 'I' (see below).



On some original drawings, to be seen in a special Basler Taube 95 Exhibit, they had all been signed 'Berri', proof enough? The official cover had on the rear his story, i.e. Berri's.

- ☞ Some of the new red SBB/CFF mainline locos (Type 460) now carry massive advertising, unthinkable a decade ago: AGFA films, CIBA (white), Danzas (yellow).

Also the BLS locos can be seen in their new blue, and make a more interesting photo background. Has this anything to do with the fact that a number of these locos are not owned by the SBB! To save millions, they say, they are leased from an American financing firm, also unthinkable a decade ago.

- ☞ The inland letter rates will apparently go up next year: A-mail from 80 to 90c, B-mail 60 to 70c. Date not fixed yet I believe. What does it cost the PTT to print all the leaflets, tables, lists etc for the multitude of users, internal and external?
- ☞ From a usually reliable source I have heard that before Christmas new ATMs will be issued by Liechtenstein in a really shattering way. Watch this space.
- ☞ In a recent poll of collector's feelings six questions were answered with good to nearly perfect ratings for general aspects of the Philatelic Bureau service, but the seventh got only 47.9 % approval, on attractiveness of the stamp designs.
- ☞ The new combined Swiss and Liechtenstein stamp to be issued on 5.9.95 is actually the same stamp for both countries, as the value is the same, 60c. Therefore it is being printed in only one place, the PTT Printing Works, attractively in recess and offset. The same coinage and postal rates are used in both countries.
- ☞ The Philatelic Counter in Bern is moving on 18.9.95 from its present place in the UPU building to the main PO Schanzenpost 3000 Bern 1. The postal address remains 3030 Bern. Geneva has also moved and is now on the ground floor, side entrance.
- ☞ In Winterthur next year (from 28.8.96 to 1.9.96) there will be a new type of stamp exhibition - to follow ideas from the north - the 'Swiss Stamp Open', under the VSPHv. The main part of each exhibit must be philatelic items (as now) but the rest can be pictures, maps, cards, phone cards, flowers, leaves, etc. Interesting to see how it develops.
- ☞ Ivan Tillen celebrated his 80th birthday in Geneva recently. We met in Bern to visit the PTT Museum. He is nearly as lively as before, interested in everything and follows the Newsletter, but buys nothing new. We wish him good health in the future.
- ☞ A new book on the Ticino Ovals was available at Basler Taube 95, by Giorgio Lavater, who also exhibited his Ovals; 73 pages in German for CHF 25. Useful for specialists.
- ☞ Also at the BT 95 Markus Seitz had his new 'ATM Schweiz Spezialkatalog 1995' on sale. This 3rd edition has 84 pages and costs CHF 18. One of the best special catalogues.



## Did You Know?



### September 1995

- ☞ On the 4th December Liechtenstein will install their first Frama ATM dispensers, one at each of 12 PO's in the Duchy, but with the sensational new Frama system, tried out in Denmark last year, namely with 11 multi-coloured pictures printed one after the other on the roll of white paper.

The stamp value only is printed on site, in black, not in red as before. Small marks electronically control the exact cut-off of each stamp. The pictures themselves, of the arms of each of the 11 communes, will be released in a month or so. Watch this space.

This brilliant idea opens up all sorts of possibilities. Could all the 2500-odd Frama dispensers in Switzerland issue stamps with only the pictures of that village on them? What would forgers make of it? Would collectors be pleased?

- ☞ At the beginning of August Luzern put its up-dated letter coding and sorting installation back into service, now including the video operator's personal number. Only Bern and Lausanne have yet to be updated to ILV level.
- ☞ More details of the proposed new postal rates for 1996 are seeping out. It seems that the age-old maximum weight for letters of 250g (above would be a parcel) is being broken, i.e., letters above 150g will cost more. Also covers larger than B5 will cost more too.
- ☞ The 'Express' and 'EMS' services will be reorganized, meaning the loss of 200 jobs (they say) and not likely to be cheaper.
- ☞ The next exhibition in the PTT Museum in Bern will be based on the extensive collection donated last year by Max Keller, 'Pre-Philately of Canton Zürich'. His widow has written out in modern German the contents of many of these letters, which go back to the 16th century. Sure to be very interesting; from the 29th August to the 12th November.
- ☞ The 80c value of the new Cinema stamps shows the actress playing the part of Anna Göldin, who was not only the last witch to be beheaded in Switzerland (Glarus), but also in Europe, namely in 1782.

I gleaned this information, not from the PTT handout, but from the supplementary volume - issued at the Basler Taube 95 - '*Motivhandbuch Schweiz*' in which all. Swiss stamps are described in detail, 1991-1995.

- ☞ Two recent K-cancels are interesting for different reasons. The one for Bern Schanzenpost documents the move from the historic 'old UPU' site to a counter in the HPO (as in Luzern); at least the picture remains the same.



The Nürens Dorf one shows the small chapel of St. Oswald on the old Roman road from Turicum to Vitodurum, in which the wall paintings were restored in 1400, but the date of construction is not recorded. The FD of the cancel, designed by the postmaster, is the Saint's day of Oswald. 'Breite' is the location.














## Did You Know?



### October 1995

-  According to Swiss Radio the British Isles are in a state of chaos due to the change from lbs to kilograms. Of course philatelists know that they were in the forefront of this change when, more than 140 years ago, they accepted that perforations be measured in teeth per 2 cm! And kiloware is kiloware whatever it weighs.
  
-  The PTT is in trouble, this time for printing the new A-mail 90c stamp (issue date 28.11.95) before parliament had decided on the increases for 1996. A stamp booklet with ten such stamps (with cut edges) was shown on the Swiss TV evening news. In spite of many examples in other countries the PTT refuse to consider 'A' stamps without the value shown on them.
  
-  At this year's OLMA in St Gallen (12 to 22 October) there will be the usual special cancellation, every year different, and the second special postcard, both by the same artist, H Schweizer.
  
-  George Guignard of Yverdon is about to produce a book on the PTT labels, used for a multitude of purposes. A provisional list, without illustrations, is in the PTT Library. As the PTT itself has only a sketchy collection, this is a very difficult project, and the previous attempt by Ed Rüttimann, covering 1882-1943, is long overtaken.
  
-  The PTT has put its first double-decker yellow postal coach into service, on the popular route St Gallen to Heiden, with 89 seats.
  
-  The quarterly magazine 'Zack', for Junior Philatelists, has devoted its latest issue to Aids; all stamps issued with this theme are discussed in three languages, together with all the medical information needed today. A brave and really worthwhile effort.
  
-  The PTT-printed Europa stamps of 16.5.95, and the new CH/FL stamp of 5.9.95, have no selvedge notes or signs, trimmed off I guess, so that identification of individual sheets is not possible. The PTA does not help much; it gives some more details, but in the latter case leaves out the obvious yellow colour of a very complex stamp. All of them, I think, are good.
  
-  One can ask "Why does the 180c Telecom 95 stamp not look Swiss?" It is because, for the first time, the border is coloured, if one does not count the beige background of the early Pro Juventute stamps.
  
-  The canceller for '7551 Vinadi' (Swiss-Austrian frontier) shown, had a curious history in that the Vinadi PO had been unused since 1962, i.e. before the PLZ system was introduced. This canceller had lain unused in nearby Martina for years until, perhaps, a cancel collector demanded a strike as it was listed in the PLZ booklets.



Only in 1970 was the Vinadi PO declared officially closed. The previous cancel, without PLZ, was issued in 1944 when the old name 'Weinberg' was changed to the Romansch 'Vinadi'. Who has a Vinadi cancel without PLZ?



## Did You Know?



### November 1995

- ☞ Contrary to expectations, the PTT have done the right thing and put the 'new' 50c postman 'variety' (Z.738R) on sale, at Philatelic counters only. Singles, mint and CTO, cancelled 5.9.95, and a mint strip of eleven. See the June issue of the Newsletter for more detail.
- ☞ According to the latest PTT Stock List there are now definitive stamps on sale from eight separate series, excluding Frama's, but I note that the present 80c 'A' stamp is not listed. Enquiries were fruitless, there seems to be no date for withdrawal from sale, but until the end of the year there are sufficient stocks. The same applies to the 60c postcard.
- ☞ The new A and B post stamps and cards no longer have the line of square dots along the left-hand edge (Austrian Schrack system). The PTT say this is because their image recognition system can sort out the Bs from the As. This implies that fluorescence is no longer necessary for facing the covers before cancellation.
- ☞ The new stamps for 28.11.95 with the increased rates are being publicised with the proviso "subject to approval by the Federal Council". However they say the stamps will be issued in any case, whatever the consequences, see last month's Newsletter.
- ☞ Two attractive booklets, with cut edges, will be issued for the 70c rabbit on 22.11.95 (advance issue date of main issues), and the 90c on the 28.11.95.

- ☞ In the 11/95 issue of their BBZ, Zumstein note that for the combined Switzerland/Liechtenstein 60c stamp issue Vaduz gave their FDC an unbalanced view of equality.

See the illustrations →



- ☞ The special, non-philatelic, exhibition in the PTT Museum is on 'Yellow', in all possible ways, historical, chemical, postal, etc. A new idea and quite interesting; running until 27th May 1996.
- ☞ A new project is under way to sort out and number the green PP registered labels, for letters and packets. It seems that the green is being replaced by black, but there will not be a further change to bar-coding, as these labels seldom, if ever, are used for foreign items.

- ☞ A new, attractive pictorial K-cancel is being used for 6999 Astano (TI) to honour their famous architect, Domenico Trezzini, whom Peter the Great took from the Danish king and used to build some of the greatest palaces in St Petersburg. He died there (see the figure).



- ☞ I was shown a poor strike on dark paper of Vinadi, without PLZ (see last month's DYK) but managed to make a tolerable tracing (below)





## Did You Know?



### December 1995

☞ It didn't sink in until a friend drew my attention to the article by the discoverer of the new 50c 'hairline in T' stamp in the SBZ for June/July '95 (see the June Newsletter). Rolf Wernecke mentions not only the coil stamps, but also that he had found it in booklets too. The PTT Printing Works explanation did not cover this possibility. He shows the hairline was broken in the second issue of these booklets (see my article in the Newsletter, January 1993).

Now Adolf Krämer of the very active Dübendorf Club has found that in the first issue (without the values at the top) there are only vestiges of the line, mainly at the bottom. I have found this on the FDC of the booklet stamps too. This shows that all four pictures on the first transfer roller were used. This is the only explanation to me of the increasing size of the hairline as time goes on and also confirms that for the second booklet printing a new cylinder was made.

☞ The PTT expect that sales of 70c postcards will drop to only 6m per year, as they are only used for competitions today. A few years ago sales were 10m per year.

☞ Perhaps by the time you read this the Federal Council will have decided on the new postal rates for 1996. My guess is that the decision will be postponed for a couple of months.

☞ The parcel labels with printed on 3.00 and 3.50 'stamps' have not sold well so will be 'rare' next year. I doubt if they will be printed again with the new rates.

☞ Only in 1881 were 'non-smoking' compartments introduced in Swiss trains, now in 1997 all regional trains will be 'non-smoking' only, following the lead of Zürich. Worth a special cancel?

☞ In 1996 there will be a fourth Sport stamp, 70 + 30c.

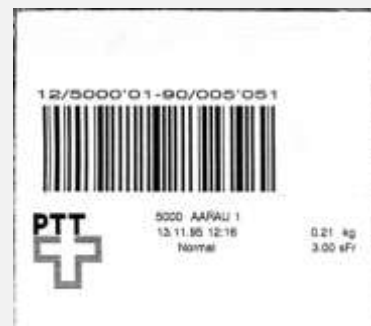
☞ From the 14th November to the 10th March 1996 there is a rather special exhibition in the PTT Museum, 'The Post as Advertising Carrier', by Beatrice Röllli (of the auction firm in Luzern), the result of 20 years of careful collecting.

All forms are shown, from many countries and going back 150 years. When first shown at the WIBRA, in the thematic section, it threw the judges into confusion, just as it should. Such collections which cut across all conventional lines are sorely needed today. Well worth a visit.

☞ In the PTA for 24.4.95 tests with parcel labels with bar codes for the registration details and the recipient's postcode, were announced, at three POs; Aarau 1 (1.5.95), Zürich-Mülligen (2.5.95), and Dietikon 1 (15.5.95) see illustration below.



I also visited Aarau 1 recently to see their self-service machine. Made by IBM, it only accepts phonecards for payment. After placing the parcel on the scale the normal rate is shown (CHF 3 is the minimum) then registered, express or bulky extras can be selected.



All this would be CHF 18 minimum, but the phonecard has a maximum of CHF 10 only. Anyway it didn't work, I couldn't get my card back, and the machine had to be partially dismantled to find my receipt!



However a new unannounced bar-coded label is around for registered parcels, see left. Found by Charles LaBlonde, all black only.