

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Philately heading for future

After philately appeared as a consequence of the birth of the stamp, it developed rather quickly from mere compiling of stamps to a wide-ranging science as we know it today. It began in 1841, one year after the issue of the first stamp, with a small advertisement in an English newspaper asking for cancelled stamps. Since 1860 dealing with stamps appeared, catalogues were first issued in 1863 and the first association solely for stamp collecting was founded in 1866 in Canada. The first international exhibition exclusively for stamps was organised in 1881 in Vienna, and one can surmise that already at the exhibition in Vienna in 1873 some stamp exhibits were shown. The first exhibition under FIP patronage was organised in 1930 in Algeria.

At first only traditional exhibits were mounted and exhibited. With the collecting of prephilatelic letters and the study of rates and routes of cancelled documents, Postal History as we know it today started and is one of the most popular disciplines in philately. Also other collecting fields derived from the traditional collection and became separate disciplines, as Postal Stationery and Aerophilately. Thematic collections started around 1887 to 1890, and the first theme was of course philatelic portraits, that were the most frequent motives on the stamps at that time. Since its foundation FIP was also always concerned by the young collectors. It was one of the points in the aims of FIP at its foundation in 1926, and since 1959, when M. Hartwig Danesch was elected chairman of the Youth Commission, this field was more and more developed. Under his guidance the young collectors found the place they deserved in the annals of philately.

All philatelic classes are represented today at the international exhibitions and a future without them is unthinkable - there are even always more new disciplines appearing. Almost every class has its own commission with delegates out of many member federations, who try to make our hobby lively and interesting. To enable the philatelists to go on enjoying their leisure time activity, FIP and its member federations keep their eyes open to include everything the collectors want. This is the only way our hobby can defend its first place before the other hobbies. We worry about the electronic medias like telephone, fax and emails, that sensibly reduced the written mail. So the future of philately can only be assured by us philatelists, by engaging us fully for our hobby and always proving that the stamp is an open window onto the world and cannot be replaced as such.

One thing is certain, especially our youth is attracted by the computer world, and therefore we try to find ways to combine "Computer and philately". It is our duty to find the right way for the future of our hobby, and also to pass on the sceptre to the young generation when they are up to the responsibility, not forgetting to teach them all we know.

National, international, continental and FIP exhibitions contribute to the future of our hobby. In most stamp exhibitions we find all the philatelic classes, and in all continental and FIP exhibitions the posts and the dealers, what is in the interest of of all philatelists and not-yet-philatelists. This year we have five international exhibitions : LONDON 2010 and PORTUGAL 2010 under the Patronage of FIP, ANTVERPIA 2010, PLANETE TIMBRE 2010 and JOBURG 2010 with FIP Recognition. Five exhibitions, where the exhibitors will show their exhibits, so that every visitor can see by himself how instructive and interesting our hobby is, that it is part of the cultural life and appeals to all age groups.

No matter how we reach our aim, we have to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to enjoy our hobby. Personally I am feeling optimistic about future and I am sure that to reach this goal, the coordination and cooperation between the FIP, the member and the continental federations can still be further developed.