
Castellum



Luxembourg
Collectors Club

3304 Plateau Drive
Belmont, CA 94002
U.S.A.

E-mail: lcc@luxcentral.com
Web: <http://www.luxcentral.com/stamps/LCC/>
Gary B. Little, President (gary@luxcentral.com)
Edward H. Jarvis, Secretary-Treasurer (EdJa@aol.com)

Vol. 1, No. 1

© 1997 Luxembourg Collectors Club and contributors

June 1997

President's Message

by Gary Little

Welcome to the first issue of *Castellum*, the journal of the new Luxembourg Collectors Club. The LCC, a California nonprofit corporation, was formed to provide information to its members on all aspects of Luxembourg philately and to encourage collectors to better understand and appreciate the colorful history and culture of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

We held our first formal meeting on June 5 at the Pacific 97 World Philatelic Exhibition in San Francisco. About 30 avid Luxembourg collectors showed up and heard an excellent presentation by Jos Wolff, President of the Federation of Luxembourg Philatelic Societies, on the history of organized philately in Luxembourg. The text of his speech is in this issue of *Castellum*. Ed Jarvis also showed his collection of #1 and #2 on cover and James McGee showed his collection of the rouletted-in-color issue. Wow! I contributed a demonstration of my Luxembourg Philately web site at <http://www.luxcentral.com/stamps/>.

Many thanks to the Banque du Timbre stamp store in Luxembourg City for donating three copies of its *Prifix 1997* specialized Luxembourg catalog to the club. The Luxembourg Office des Timbres also donated three copies of *Eis Post*, a comprehensive history of postal operations in Luxembourg. We put one copy of each publication into the club library and gave away the others as door prizes at the meeting.

Our first 10 members signed up at the San Francisco meeting and we're hoping to add many more in the coming months. These are truly enthusiastic members who are eager to share their interests and knowledge with other collectors around the world. The LCC fills a void that has been present since the old Luxembourg Philatelic Study Club shut down in 1965 after a run of 15 years. We're honored to welcome to our ranks two members of the LPSC who also happen to be well-known exhibitors of Luxembourg material — Robert Danzer of New York, perhaps the pre-eminent Luxembourg philatelist in North America, and Allan Wichelman of California.

Although the LCC is still young and its membership small we're hopeful of reaching a critical mass in the next few months so that we can rapidly expand our member services. For example, we hope to build up the library, organize club auctions, provide translation services, and so on. We'll keep you posted on our progress.

I encourage all of you with access to the internet to monitor our World Wide Web site at <http://www.luxcentral.com/stamps/LCC/> for up-to-the-minute communications from us. This site is integrated with my own Luxembourg Philately site which contains a tremendous amount of information on all aspects of Luxembourg stamp collecting, including full-color images of many rare stamps and covers.

In case you're wondering, the name of our journal, *Castellum*, was inspired by the famous deed of April 12, 963 A.D. by which Count Sigefroi acquired the "*castellum qd dr Lucilinburhuc*" (castle called Lucilinburhuc) from the St. Maximin Abbey of Trier. This 1,034-year-old transaction is recognized as the act of birth of the Luxembourg state. The name also brings to mind the many other historic castles scattered throughout the present Grand Duchy.

History of Organized Philately in Luxembourg

by Jos Wolff

The following is the English translation of a speech given in French by Jos Wolff to the Luxembourg Collectors Club on June 5, 1997 at Pacific 97. Jos has been the President of the FSPL (Federation of Luxembourg Philatelic Societies) for almost five years and has been active in organized philately in Luxembourg for over 20 years.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear Luxembourg collectors,

Let me begin by thanking you for giving me the opportunity to speak here today, in my capacity as President of the "Fédération des Sociétés Philatéliques du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg" (F.S.P.L.), about Luxembourg and its philatelic life. I will begin with a short description of the country.

1. The Country

Luxembourg is located at the intersection of the channels of communication and the historical postal routes between the Dutch harbors and the Lombard cities with the east-west Frankfurt-Brussels axis. As a contact point between the Germanic and Latin cultures it has always played an important part in European history.

This open-mindedness doesn't prevent the population from being very attached to their native country.

From the economic and political points of view, Luxembourg is the most experienced country in the area of economic and customs unions, beginning with the personal union of the sovereign with the Netherlands (1815-1839), through the German Customs Union (1842-1919), the Belgian Economic Union (since 1919) and the Benelux (1944) up to the European Economic Community and the European Union now.

This situation strongly affected the postal life of the country and is reflected in its philately, too.

Although the postal organization in Luxembourg goes back to the beginnings of the official post under Franz of Taxis in 1516, I shall limit myself to the period just preceding our present postal administration.

In 1815, the Congress of Vienna raised Luxembourg to a Grand Duchy and gave it as an independent state to the King of the Netherlands, William I, in personal union. But, against the decisions of the Congress, the country didn't get its own administration. On the postal level it was connected with the Belgian provinces of Liège and Limburg to form the 5th Dutch district of postal inspection.

On April 25, 1830, the Belgian provinces separated from the Netherlands, taking the Grand Duchy with them, except the City of Luxembourg where the Prussian garrison of the fortress protected the Dutch administration.

The country was divided politically and postally for nine years. After the Treaty of London of April 19, 1839, the Walloon part came definitely to Belgium and the statute of independent state was confirmed for the rest of the Grand Duchy. On June 18, 1839, the post became again part of the Dutch organization.

On January 1st, 1846, the first Luxembourg postal rates came into effect, but the official monetary unit was still the Dutch florin with 100 cents.

On January 1st, 1849, the franc was introduced as monetary unit and at the same time, the territory being smaller, the rates of 1846 were reduced by 25% for inland.

The 10th of September 1852 is the official issuing date of the first Luxembourg stamps. I stress "official", as it seems that some of these stamps had been used before that date. These two stamps show William III, King of the Netherlands and Grand-Duke of Luxembourg, in profile, who is also to be seen on the first Dutch stamps.

2. Founding of the F.S.P.L.

Organized philately in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg probably began in 1890 with the founding of the first philatelic association, the Union des Timbrophiles de Luxembourg (U.T.L.).

From 1923 to 1934 most of the Luxembourg collectors were members of the U.T.L. which was attached to the Royal Federation of Philatelic Associations of Belgium.

Thanks to a very active teacher, Jean-Pierre Heischbourg, after four years of hard negotiations, from 1931 to 1934, a federation was finally founded which has stayed almost the same up to now.



When the four presidents of Luxembourg philatelic associations, Henri Schwinnen of Philatelia Differdange, Emile Adam of Phila Dudelange, Eugène Lemmer of the association of Esch-sur-Alzette and Bernard Wolff of the U.T.L., signed on February 22, 1934, the statutes making the "Fédération des Sociétés Philatéliques du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg" a non-profit-making company, according to the law of 1928, they stipulated in the first article of these statutes that the federation had been founded "de facto" on Sunday, July 16, 1933, in Diekirch.

From the end of 1934 to 1939, just before the first national "Day of the Stamp", these five associations were the pillars of the F.S.P.L., a.s.b.l.

It was not without reason that in February 1934 the fathers of the F.S.P.L. themselves gave the 16th of July 1933 as birthdate of the federation. The founding of the F.S.P.L. was not a spontaneous action, as often happens for philatelic associations, but an event that had been well prepared; all had begun at the

exhibition in Echternach in August 1932, where the presidents of the associations had been approached about the principle of the foundation of a federation and the organization of the exhibition in Diekirch.

The F.S.P.L., as a "de facto" company of six associations, was in place before the exhibition in Diekirch; before that date, it had a secretary general, Jean-Pierre Heischbourg, it had organized the first federal exhibition in Diekirch from July 16 to 18, 1933, and had granted its patronage to the exhibition in Esch from August 12 to 22, 1933.

The laying of the cornerstone of the F.S.P.L. on occasion of the exhibition in Diekirch - a symbolic action - was thought, according to the importance of this philatelic event, to be a solemn, public and democratic occasion - a meeting, a banquet, an exhibition and a spectacular philatelic souvenir for which the postal administration had issued the day before two supplemental air mail stamps.

In the twenties everywhere in the country associations had been founded and their wish to unite to try to solve their problems in common resulted in the foundation of the F.S.P.L.

Moreover, Luxembourg wanted to follow the example of neighboring countries where the national unity of the collectors had already taken shape. And it was certainly of advantage to be represented by a national federation in the F.I.P. which had been founded in 1926.

In six decades the F.S.P.L. has succeeded in becoming the accepted spokesperson of Luxembourg collectors, on the national as well as the international level, and it was able to solve the problems that came up, even if it wasn't always easy, as one can see in the crises of the years 1933 - 1934, and later on, in 1946 - 1947 and around 1960.

In 1934 the F.S.P.L. had 5 member associations representing about 500 collectors; 1946 they were 14 clubs with 2500 philatelists; and these last years, the F.S.P.L. counts 38 societies of about 3.300 senior collectors and 300 juniors which represent about 1% of the Grand Duchy's population. A percentage which fully justifies the sentence : "This Grand Duchy, small in surface, but great in philately".

3. Organization of the F.S.P.L.

The F.S.P.L. is run by a Board of Directors composed of nine members half of which are elected every second year for a period of four years. Three times a year the presidents of the 38 member associations or their representatives meet at a General Council to deal with current issues. Once a year the delegates of the associations (1 delegate per 50 members, with a maximum of 4 for one association) meet at the National Congress of the F.S.P.L. which is organized by a different association every year and where all the important decisions are taken and the elections for the Board held every second year.

Furthermore the federation includes 6 commissions :

1. the commission for traditional philately which is also responsible for postal stationery, postal history and aerophilately
2. the commission of experts which has a lot of problems finding new members
3. the thematic commission which organizes since 1958 every year at Pentecost, in cooperation with the association for thematic philately (Philcolux), a national thematic exhibition with international participation, in Mondorf-les-Bains, the EXPHIMO
4. the commission for youth philately, where the 28 youth sections of the associations are represented
5. the commission for maximaphily which organizes since 1990 the "Day of Maximaphily", a national maximaphily exhibition, every year in cooperation with a different association
6. the commission of study of the Luxembourg cancellations which issues catalogues of all types of cancellations.

The official organ of the federation is the "Moniteur du Collectionneur" which comes out five times a year.

Since the "exhibitors' passports" were introduced, about 500 collections have been registered, especially exhibits of modern philately.

4. Day of the Stamp

On April 29, 1936, the first international philatelic exhibition of the F.S.P.L. was organized at the "Cercle" in the capital. The XIth F.I.P. Congress was held on this occasion, where the annual "Day of the Stamp" was introduced.

Luxembourg organized its first "Day of the Stamp" on April 23, 1939, and we can read about it in the "Luxembourg Philatélique", n^o 9, of February 23, 1940:

On the occasion of the 11th F.I.P. Congress which was held in Luxembourg at the end of August 1936, the delegates of the member federations decided to organize every year in their respective countries a "Day of the Stamp".

The Luxembourg Federation didn't succeed in executing the 1936 resolution in 1937 or 1938, for reasons beyond their control. But in the year of the jubilee (in 1939 the centenary of the independence of the Grand-Duchy was celebrated) they couldn't allow this abstention. The leaders of the Luxembourg philately got down to work and, in spite of some difficulties, they succeeded in determining the date of the first Luxembourg "Day of the Stamp" on April 23, 1939, on the date of the official commemoration of the Centenary of the Renewal of our Independence. The Postal Administration had granted a special cancellation with the text "Luxembourg 23-4-1939, Journée du Timbre".

Since 1939, the "Day of the Stamp" has been organized every year in Luxembourg, except in the war years 1942-44, combined with an exhibition, by the F.S.P.L., until 1972. Every time the capital was the meeting point of the collectors, except 1946 in Dudelange and 1947 in Differdange.

Since 1973 the "Day of the Stamp" has been organized every year by a different association of the F.S.P.L., alternately one year for youth philately and one year for traditional philately.

In 1989 the working group "Day of the Stamp" was founded to explain and compile the documentation on this subject and to help the exhibitors to build up exhibits on it.

5. F.I.P. Exhibitions

In 1969 the F.S.P.L. organized JUVENTUS '69, the first International Stamp Exhibition for Young Philatelists under the patronage of the F.I.P., with 527 exhibitors who filled 1057 frames.

In 1978 it organized the fifth F.I.P. Exhibition for Youth, JUPHILUX '78, which comprised 1557 frames, with 455 exhibitors, and 7 exhibits in Literature.

The ninth World Exhibition for Young Philatelists, JUVALUX '88, took place in 1988 in Luxembourg and had with 2006 the highest number of frames ever shown in an F.I.P. Exhibition for Youth, filled by the exhibits of 465 exhibitors. The average in all these Exhibitions is about 1400 frames. 22 exhibits in Literature completed this exhibition.

At present the F.S.P.L. prepares the 13th Exhibition of this kind, with 1000+ frames for Youth philately and 1000+ frames for Postal History. JUVALUX 98 will be held from June 18 to 21, 1998.

Although philately in Luxembourg knows the same problems as all over the world, especially in getting new young members to prepare for the future, it is nevertheless very active and its leaders try to find solutions on the national as well as the international level.

New Stamp Issues

by Gary Little

The following stamps were issued by Luxembourg on May 12:



JUALUX 98. These stamps publicize the JUALUX 98 World Philatelic Exhibition to be held in Luxembourg on June 18-21, 1998. The themes depicted on these stamps are youth philately and postal history.



Mondorf-les-Bains Spas — 150th Anniversary. The first therapeutic spa opened in Mondorf-les-Bains in 1847. The highly-mineralized spring water was tapped during unsuccessful salt deposit exploration during the early 1840s.



Grand Ducal Gendarmerie — Bicentennial. The National Mounted Gendarmerie Corps was founded by a legislative Act of 1797. Its mandate is to maintain public order, ensure the safety of citizens, and to guarantee the application of the law. This elite corps currently has 630 members.



The Luxembourg Union of Small Domestic Animals Farming Societies was founded in 1922 and currently has 42 member associations representing more than 5,000 people. The goal of the Union is to preserve and encourage animal farming on a small scale.



The theme for these **Europa stamps** is “stories and legends”. The stamps depict two famous Luxembourg folk tales, “Melusina of Luxembourg” and “The Hunter of Hollenfels Castle”.

Cover of the Month

by Gary Little

Here is an unusual cover that I picked up at Pacific 97. It hosts a complete set of the 1908 Marie-Adélaïde Caritas forerunners and is postmarked June 15, 1908 (second day of use!). These charity seals had no franking value and were supposed to be affixed to the back of an envelope, but the postmaster in Diekirch obviously looked the other way in this case.



Call for Content!

by Gary Little

Do you have a special stamp or cover to share with your fellow members? If so, make a color copy of it and send it to me with a brief description and I'll get it into a future issue of *Castellum*.. Electronic contributions are especially welcome — please scan stamps at 300 dpi and covers at 150 dpi and save the files in "gif" or "jpeg" format. My e-mail address is gary@luxcentral.com. Use the street address on the masthead for regular mail. Feature articles are also welcome, of course.