

NEWSLETTER

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**A.I.D.S.
ON
STAMPS**

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CREATING AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT - THROUGH A UNIVERSAL MEDIUM

Protection: One Way Of Combat



ARGENTINA
(See **PHILADEMICS** page 2)

IN THIS ISSUE

Alert Readers.....4
 Awareness, Education, & Support.....4
 On The Road Again.....5
 World AIDS Day '94 Update.....6

REGULAR FEATURES

Did You Know ?.....6
 Fact Or Fiction ?.....5
 (First Day) Cover Story.....8
 Guest Speaker.....3
 In Focus.....7
 Issues A Through Z.....5
 Point To Ponder.....2
 PHILADEMICS.....2
 Quarterly Quote.....5
 Question Corner.....6
 YOUR Two Cents Worth.....4

PHILADEMICS

The two stamps featured on the front page of this issue perhaps say more from their graphic interpretation than any lecture or talk might do. On the one hand, the humorous, smiling condom, represented on the \$0.10 value, draws a clear contrast to the black cloud of doom lurking over the bright colored home full of life, as represented on the \$0.26 value.

The sword and shield in the hands of the personified condom imply the readiness for battle against any life-threatening intrusion ! Yet, on the other hand, with the dark cloud hanging overhead, life does not have to be all doom and gloom !

Certainly the humorous treatment of this still somewhat sensitive area of discussion in the understanding of AIDS has made it easier to break the ice for persons of all ages.

This particular issue was given quite a bit of press at the time of its release - December 12, 1992 and it was only a matter of a few months before reports of a sellout were reported. According to the brochure I received on this issue, a total of 5,000,000 of the condom stamp (\$0,10) were printed, and 3,000,000 of the dark cloud (\$0,26) were printed.

Most educational talks or lectures on AIDS and AIDS awareness include some reference to the use of condoms, not just for those NOT diagnosed but, especially for those who are already HIV+ and know it! Argentina is to be commended for using such a creative, yet controversial graphic on this issue. The message does get across in a very subtle, but forceful way.

Perhaps philately just isn't as drab and boring as some would make it out to be. If we can be a further vehicle for AIDS awareness and get a message to people through this universal medium, all the better, not just for the world of philately, but for the whole world !

How Do We Function ?

The AIDS ON STAMPS Newsletter is put together with the hopes of creating a better understanding of this horrific disease by sharing through the philatelic world, the extent of this pandemic. As a person living with HIV/AIDS now for over nine years, this topical area of stamp collecting has proven to be very therapeutic. The subscription fee of \$10.00 (four quarterly issues) sees half of that donated to AIDS charities in British Columbia with the other half helping to defray postage & production costs. Please make cheques or money orders payable to COMTRU VENTURES.

<u>PUBLICATION</u>	<u>SCHEDULE</u>
<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>DEADLINE</u>
January 25	January 10
April 25	April 10
July 25	July 10
October 25	October 10

POINT TO PONDER:
 Improve mail delivery -
 mail the posties their pay cheques!

GUEST SPEAKER

WHY EXHIBIT AIDS ?

By Rev. Robert T. Vos, Badger Stamp Club
 Bob Voss is a pastor at Lake Edge Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin. He's been involved in stamp collecting since the mid 1950s. Other topical interests include Martin Luther, Dag Hammarskjöld, and Dome of the Rock.

At the judges critique for DANPEX '91, I was queried by one of the judges, "Why would you exhibit that topic?" I bit my tongue at the time, but I would like to now go public on why I collect and exhibit the topic of AIDS.

First, I collect HIV-related stamps for personal reasons. I lost a brother-in-law from the ravages of HIV infection in 1988. Professionally, I provide pastoral counseling to persons and families affected by HIV. When I read in Linn's Stamp News that San Marino issued a set of four stamps to publicize the 1988 International AIDS Conference (Figure 1), it seemed only natural to combine my personal interests with my life-long love affair with stamps.



Fig. 1

Second, I exhibit AIDS on stamps for the educational value. By sharing the facts about AIDS through stamps,

covers, meters, and cancellations, it is my hope that more people will be HIV educated. In fact, many countries issue AIDS stamps for the specific purpose of education. Brunei accurately portrays the routes of HIV transmission (Figure 2). Argentina promotes prevention through the use of condoms (Figure 3).



Third, collecting a modern topic tantalizes the philatelist's need for challenge and discovery. It has been exciting to sort through mixture and cover boxes for special cancellations (Figure 4). I still cannot locate seven of the 41 worldwide issues of AIDS stamps. The search is exciting and fun.



Fig. 4

Fourth, I exhibit AIDS stamps because it promotes fellowship among collectors and dealers. An APS judge has personally reviewed my exhibit with suggestions and encouragement. Collectors have generously sent copies of their exhibits and extra AIDS-related material. A dealer who received my want list of nine AIDS issues could only provide two. The company sent them to me free, apologizing for not being able to provide all the stamps. Philatelists are wonderful people to be associated with!

Finally, I exhibit AIDS on stamps for the same reason I have collected stamps for 38 years -- for the fun of it!

YOUR Two Cents Worth:

We always appreciate receiving copies of letters that you write to Canada Post or your MPs in support of the AIDS On Stamps Project. We'd like to share one of those with you now, with permission of the writer, Linda Manzon, Executive Secretary, ANKORS: AIDS Network Outreach Support Society, West Kootenay/Boundary, B.C.

"I am writing on behalf of our Board of Directors to urge you to recognize AIDS on one of Canada's postage stamps. A target date of 1996 would be most appropriate as the XI International AIDS Conference will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia.

A stamp would be invaluable in reaching millions of Canadians and would demonstrate Canada's commitment to creating AIDS awareness, education and support.

Many other countries throughout the world have recognized the significance of the AIDS pandemic in this way. Canada Post's inaction has become a glaring omission for all to see.

There are numerous Canadians who have lived with AIDS who have achieved national and international recognition for their work (such as Kevin Brown, Dr. Peter and John Gates) as well as any number of themes that could graphically represent AIDS.

We join with other AIDS groups across this country to embrace the AIDS on Stamps project and urge you to get involved."

ALERT READERS

We were impressed by the response we got from our QUESTION CORNER section last issue regarding International AIDS Conferences recognized philatelically. Several readers were quick to bring to our attention our omission of the special cancel from Italy for the VIIth International AIDS Conference In Firenze, in 1991. We are pleased to know we have alert readers and appreciate being informed. We now have that cancel in our collection also!

AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT IN 1994.

THANKS to YOU, our subscribers, we were able to make the following donations from subscriptions and sale of our special show cover for World AIDS Day 1994 to the following AIDS charities in B.C.

VANCOUVER MEALS SOCIETY (Name changed this year to A LOVING SPOONFUL) which continues to make available hot, nutritious meals to AIDS patients who have just returned home from hospital or who are unable to prepare for themselves. [\$100.00].

AIDS VANCOUVER which makes available to PWAs emergency funding, housing, resources, and counseling in a variety of areas. [\$25.00].

AIDS VANCOUVER ISLAND which continues to put forward an extreme effort to meet the Vancouver Island PWAs challenges and needs. [\$25.00].

BCPWA SOCIETY which offers support services to PWAs needing to learn how to cope with their diagnosis. [\$25.00].

POSITIVE WOMENS NETWORK which provides special services for women in the AIDS community. [\$25.00].

YOUTHCO AIDS SOCIETY which is a relatively "new kid on the block" with focus on youth in the AIDS community catering to HIV+ persons aged 15 - 25. [\$25.00].

A total of \$225.00 was made available because of your support of the *AIDS On Stamps Project* during 1994! AGAIN, a big thank you, and hopefully our efforts will eventually see Canada have its own AIDS awareness postage stamp!

ISSUES A THROUGH Z

MALAGASY - On July 29, 1992, the Democratic Republic of Malagasy released a single stamp depicting a young couple in silhouette contained in a heart-shaped "window". The 140FMG valued stamp was released to create awareness of AIDS with a strong message stressing the importance of monogamy. (Scott # 1059)

MALDIVE ISLANDS - This set of two, Rf2 & Rf4 values, was one of the first issues to carry the WHO's World AIDS Day symbol introduced in 1988. The overprints (Scott#1307/08) also carry the WHO symbol on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of that organization. Both stamps depict a method of health prevention which can be applied to the fight against AIDS.

MEXICO - Again, a single stamp \$450 value is issued to commemorate the world fight against AIDS. On April 07, 1989, Mexico released this stamp that features people of all colors joining together by holding hands in an effort to combine forces in a global attack on AIDS. (Scott #1609).

MONACO - A combined effort on this set of two stamps covers the fight against cancer and AIDS in one issue. The 6,00fr blue/red stamp encourages the fight against cancer and the 8,00fr green/red value encourages a world fight against AIDS. This set was issued on December 01, 1994, also commemorating the Red Cross. Scott #s not yet available.

MOROCCO - On December 16, 1991, a single issue is added to the growing number of stamps worldwide to stress the importance of a global effort to fight AIDS. This 3,00 value graphically depicts two people caught up in a splatter of blood. (Scott# 730).

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Our latest exhibit entitled "**AIDS: From Diagnosis To Death**" will again be part of the annual topical show on Vancouver Island February 18 - 19 when we attend VICTOPICAL '95. We enjoyed this show last year and look forward to returning once again.

We will also be attending the Edmonton Spring Show March 17 - 19, 1995. Although some major changes are taking place at this show this year to accommodate BNAPEX '95 September 01 - 03, 1995, we are quite sure we can meet the new criteria of the March Show being restricted to a One-frame Show.

FACT OR FICTION ?

The International symbol for AIDS awareness, the Red Ribbon, has been depicted on more than one stamp.

FACT - Although the USA issue of December 01, 1993 gave prominent exposure to the red ribbon through its award winning design (24th International Asiago, [Italy] Prize of Philatelic Art as best stamp of the year.), the red ribbon can also be found on the December 01, 1993 issue from Uruguay (Scott #1518).

And, France also made a special World AIDS Day re-issue of their April 1994 Europa Discovery Series (2,80fr discovery of AIDS virus 1983) which includes a tab that features the red ribbon.

QUARTERLY QUOTE

Don't confuse an "open mind"
with one that is vacant.

DID YOU KNOW ?

> According to a recent article found in Linn's Stamp News "the average time required to produce a stamp (USA), after receipt of the completed artwork to the first day of sale, is 185 calendar days for sheet stamps, 205 calendar days for booklet or coil stamps, and 210 days for self-adhesive issues."

> That only for the second time in 126 years Canadian stamps were actually printed outside of Canada. Parliament insisted some 126 years ago that all Canadian stamps be printed on Canadian soil. The one exception was a joint issue between Canada and France in 1984 commemorating the 450th anniversary of Jacques Cartier's exploration of Canada. Then, Canada Post awarded an Australian firm a one-year contract to print both definitives and commemoratives for 1994. However, that practice is now short lived and printing of Canadian stamps will be done right here at home in Canada!

WORLD AIDS DAY 1994

Again this past December 01, we put on our one day exhibit at the Sheraton Landmark Hotel for World AIDS Day. Although the turnout was not as large as last year we were pleased to notice there were many new faces who had not yet seen the exhibit.

As part of this one day event we also conducted the draw that was carried over from the AIDS Awareness Week (October) library exhibit for "Your Opinion Counts". We wish to thank all who participated and were glad to get the feedback as we expressed in our last issue.

The winners of the three prizes were as follows:

- #1- Richard Hoffman - British Columbia, won the mint set (6) of United Nations World AIDS Day stamps,
- #2 - Tom Delane - Ontario, won a free 1995 subscription to the AIDS ON STAMPS Newsletter, and
- #3 - Jennifer Annala - British Columbia, won a set (2) of our World AIDS Day showcover/cancels ('93/'94).

Again, thanks to all who contributed by taking the time to fill out the Opinion slip.

QUESTION CORNER

Q: Have there been any discoveries of varieties or errors in any of the AIDS stamps issued to date?

A: Actually there has been an indepth study of the overprint from Ethiopia (Scott #1234-1237, also known as the Simien Fox issue) and was published in Menelik's Journal, Vol. 6, No. 2, June 1990. The error occurs in the Amharic overprint for the word AIDS. There are also significant variations in the positioning of the overprint "World AIDS Day".

We still have a fair supply of the showcover/cancel from the World AIDS Day Exhibit 1994 priced at \$2.50 each, and payable to COMTRU VENTURES. However, we are pleased to announce that the 1993 showcover is completely sold out now!

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

If you have not already renewed your Newsletter subscription for 1995 this will be your last issue, unless renewal (\$10.00) is received by March 31, 1995. (Payable to COMTRU VENTURES).

IN FOCUS

In our first issue of a new calendar year we are replacing our last year's 'TRENDS' section with this new 'IN FOCUS' feature. We hope to cover some interesting Cinderella AIDS related materials which also contribute to creating awareness, education, and support. We are very pleased to be able to include a complimentary item as our first IN FOCUS feature, and extend our thanks to Mr. David Rye for making this item available for this purpose.

The Milford Port Health Authority took the opportunity to contribute to creating AIDS awareness through the use of this "label" (Fig.1) for World AIDS Day '94. "They have been used on all mail leaving our office during November and December, and will probably continue for about a week or so more, until stocks are used up" reports Mr. Rye, Director of Port Health Services. "They have a 6p indicated "price" on them, as this is the difference between U.K. first and second class mail, and their use may lead people (who don't know any better) into thinking that their non-urgent mail has been sent "priority". They are also used, with a Port Health date stamp (Fig.2), for hand-delivered mail."

A WAD '94 leaflet (Fig.3) was enclosed with every envelope that had a WAD '94 label, sent out during November, 1994, explaining what World AIDS Day is and where further information can be obtained.

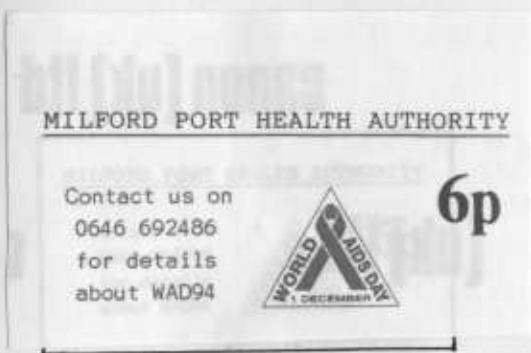


Fig.1 shows clever red ribbon, triangle WAD94 label design.

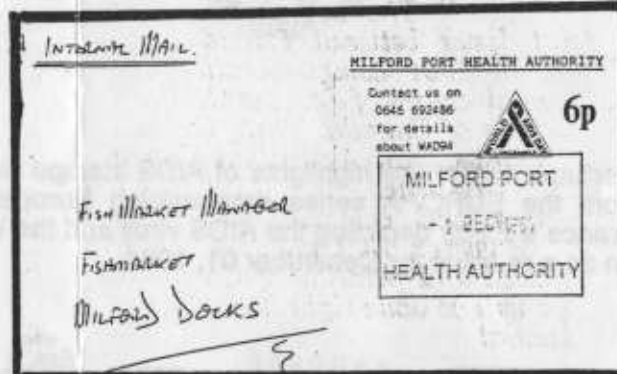


Fig. 2 showing the M.P.H.A. date stamp on hand-delivered mail.

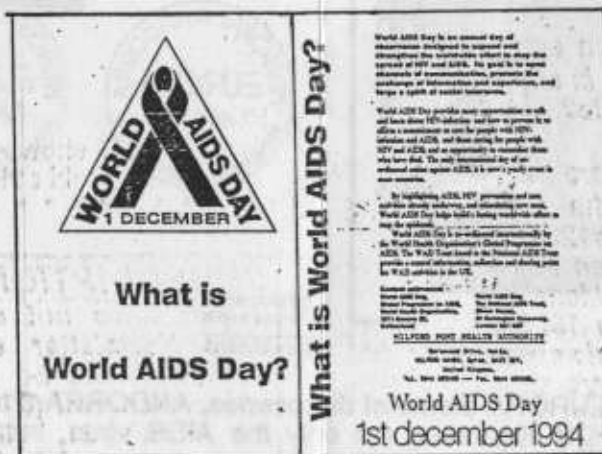


Fig. 3 shows the information leaflet as a means of World AIDS Day awareness.

Cover Story



Perhaps one of the highlights of AIDS stamps issued in 1994 was the specific theme from the EUROPA series emphasizing European Discoveries. Illustrated above is France's 2,80fr depicting the AIDS virus and the World AIDS Day red ribbon tab added on as a re-issue for December 01, 1994.



And, continuing the EUROPA theme of discoveries, ANDORRA (French) released this 2,80fr stamp. The FDC illustrates, not only the AIDS virus, but, also, the Pasteur Institute, accredited to where the HIVirus (that progresses into AIDS) was actually discovered.