Since the late 1990s, the internet has been universally available. As a medium, it is the perfect platform for the propagation of philately and for the selling of philatelic materials.

In the 20 years since, the internet has all but replaced the traditional high street stamp dealers and, to a very large extent, has replaced printed books, catalogues and magazines too.

However, the aging and conservative philatelic establishment, embodied by the venerable Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP), seemingly plagued by techno-fear and total inertia, has utterly failed to come to terms with the realities of the digital age. Even in 2019, the FIP does not recognise any form of digital literature (including websites) as having value or validity in philately and there are no provisions in the current FIP regulations regarding entries for such material into competitions.

National and local societies, taking their lead from the FIP, in general, have a similar dim view of websites. Certainly, in our experiences in Moldova, the local establishment has absolutely no regard for the internet and, even having been offered free design services, the leadership simply could not conceive of the value or purpose of such a thing.

By persisting with this attitude, the FIP and local establishments are running a huge risk of a steady descent into total obscurity and dragging the science of philately down with them, along with the hobby of stamp collecting in general.

In fact, the vast majority of stamp collectors are not even aware of the existence of an organisation called the “FIP” and their proclamations are a matter of sheer indifference to them.

Fortunately, there are now some progressive exhibition organizers who have the good sense to bypass the FIP dinosaur and who are inviting applications from website developers and digital media authors.

In the USA, we find there is a healthy attitude from the American Philatelic Society (APS) who have been accepting websites into competition for years.

In August 2019, the IMPS website will participate at “StampShow 2019”, the annual American national exhibition, in Omaha, Nebraska.

In 2018, the IMPS website won a large vermeil medal at the “ITALIA 2018” literature exhibition. Next year, we will participate at the “London 2020” international exhibition, and in 2021, we will participate in the “NOTOS 2021” European exhibition in Athens.

After the completion of the annual set of IMPS newsletters for 2018 and 2019, we will be submitting them into all competitions which accept digital literature.
This month we look at the multitude of varieties that exist for the 1993 issue “Princes of Moldavia”.

This series of stamps was originally issued on December 29, 1993. According to the official philatelic catalogue, they were printed in Spain by “Graficas Jorcar” in Barcelona. However, this may be incorrect since the earlier stamps issue, “Endangered Snake Species - World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)”, issued in July, was actually printed in Spain by “Servicios Graficos Jamsa SA” in Barcelona. It is unlikely that two different printing houses, both in the same city, were used.

The series consisted of 6 stamps. The artist was Ion Daniliuc, but we know nothing about this man.

The series consisted of 6 stamps. The artist was Ion Daniliuc, but we know nothing about this man.

The six individual stamps were issued in sheets of 32 values (8x4), and in a booklet pane consisting of a pair of tete beche, se-tenant blocks. From this booklet pane, it is possible to extract all kinds of se-tenant pairs, strips and blocks. However, these items are all standard issues and in this article, we will concern ourselves only with the unreleased, rare varieties that have not been previously documented.

The sheets were originally printed on two, very large sheets, separated by gutters and then, cut into separate sheets of 32 values, at the printing works. However, some of these large print sheets escaped the cutting process and, in some cases, they escaped the perforating process too. We have not observed any examples of complete print sheets and it seems that none survived. Only fragments of the large print sheets exist.

The sheet images below are mock-ups (accurate). Sheets that escaped the cutting/perforating process at the printing works, were later cut up into fragments, to produce every possible combination of gutter pair, mixed gutter pair and mixed gutter block. Whilst all stamps in the series are known to exist in imperforate form, not all gutter combinations have been seen, imperforate.

Unreleased se-tenant Combinations:

When you examine the large print sheet fragments, it is possible to see the following se-tenant combinations:

- Gutter Pairs-Horizontal: 1
- Mixed Gutter Pairs-Horizontal: 3
- Mixed Gutter Pairs-Vertical: 5
- Mixed Gutter Blocks: 3

Only two examples of the possible Mixed Gutter Blocks have been physically observed. These are included in the study. Not all gutter varieties are known to exist in both perforate and imperforate form. Imperforate examples are printed on the same paper and with gum. Imperforate examples of gutter pairs and mixed gutter pairs represent extreme rarities.

Continued...
The material illustrated in this article almost certainly originates from the personal collection of Michael Mittelstrass, the official philatelic agent/broker for the Moldovan postal authorities, at that time, and whose name has been mentioned in previous articles.
Treasures of Moldovan Philately: Part IX
Continued...

**Mixed Gutter Pairs (Vertical):** Continued...

- № 85-93 MGP and № 85B-93B MGP

**Mixed Gutter Blocks:**

- № 88-91 MGP4. Imperforate examples not observed.

- № 89-92 MGP4. Imperforate examples not observed.

**Mixed Perforation Errors:**

- № 88-88Bx
- № 89-89Bx

**Colour & Text Errors:**

- № 85X1 - Missing face value

- Left: № 85XII - Years, title & frame: grey
  Right: № 85XIII - Years, title & frame: grey & missing face value

**Proofs (on card, no gum)**

- № 88P91 MGP4
- № 89P89Bx
Treasures of Moldovan Philately: Part IX
Continued...

Booklet Panes:
In addition to the standard version, two varieties of the booklet pane are known, half imperforate and fully imperforate. Both varieties are equally rare. Although the existence of these booklet pane varieties creates the theoretical existence of many other imperforate se-tents, in fact, the panes have never been observed, cut into those individual components.
“Мартешор” is the traditional festival marking the beginning of Spring. Every year, the first days of Spring are marked by opening of the Мартешор Music Festival. The 54th edition was held in 2019. During the first ten days of March, the best concert halls in Chisinau and other localities hosted over 40 concerts. It is not clear why this issue was originally scheduled for release in June 2019.

The postage stamp and FDC were designed by well-known Moldovan artist, Vitaliu Pogolșa. The postcard, from which local philatelists in Chisinau realized maximum cards, was designed by Lilian șatco and 2,400 pieces were printed.

Stamp № 1087 (5.75L) features a stylized piano keyboard with a “Мартешор” taslisman in the background. The stamp was printed in a quantity of 100,000 pieces and on a minisheet of 6v (3x2).

Although the minisheet appears to have se-tenant labels, these are in fact, part of the sheet selvage (margins), as they are not perforated on the left.

New Envelope Issue: NATO Partnership for Peace - 25 Years

The envelope was designed by well-known Moldovan artist, Vitaliu Pogolșa. The nominal value was 1.75L and the purchase price was 3.00L.

The fixed stamp for № U409 (1.75L) features a stylized NATO emblem and the State flag of Moldova. The cachet for the envelope also features the NATO emblem, plus a map of Europe, showing the member states of the program.

The envelope was printed in a quantity of 10,000 pieces and a first day cancellation was issued, from which, local philatelists created private first day covers.
Keeping with the seasonal theme of Spring and following the “Martișor” issue of March 1, the Post of Moldova released a beautiful set of four stamps on March 14, celebrating the beauty of flowering shrubs.

The postage stamps and FDC were designed by well-known Moldovan artist, Elena Karacențeva, who has been responsible for many stamp designs in the past 25 years.

№ 1088 (1.20L) features the Guelder-rose or Snowball Tree (Viburnum opulus roseum). Printed 135,000 copies in minisheets of 8v

№ 1089 (2.00L) features the Lilac (Syringa vulgaris). Printed 135,000 copies in minisheets of 8v

№ 1090 (4.00L) features the Forsythia. Printed 135,000 copies in minisheets of 8v

№ 1091 (5.75L) features the Jasmine (Jasminum communis). Printed 135,000 copies in minisheets of 8v

Additionally, the Post of Moldova prepared a set of four special postcards, designed by Lilian Iațco and printed in 750 copies (each), from which, local philatelists in Chisinau realized private (non-official) maximum cards.

The official FDC features a bouquet with each of the flowers from the four stamps. It was printed in a very small quantity of only 200 pieces.
New Cancellation Issues in March

March 21 2019:
Full catalogue details at MoldovaStamps.org

On March 21, 2019, the Post of Moldova put into circulation two special cancellations: World Poetry Day and International Day of Forests. Both cancellations were designed by Lilian Iațco.

World Poetry Day is celebrated on 21 March, and was declared by UNESCO in 1999. Its purpose is to promote the reading, writing, publishing and teaching of poetry throughout the world.

The International Day of Forests was established by the UNO. Each year, various events celebrate and raise awareness of all types of forests, and trees outside forests, for the benefit of current and future generations.

New Envelope Issue: Gheorghe Vrabie (1939-2016)

March 21 2019:
Full catalogue details at MoldovaStamps.org

Gheorghe Vrabie, born March 21, 1939 at Calinesti, Balti and died March 31, 2016, at Chisinau, artist, author of the State Arms of the Republic of Moldova and of the national currency, and was called the "Father of the Moldovan leu". He was also the author of the Arms of the City of Chisinau.

He studied at the Academy of Painting, Architecture and Sculpture "I. Repin" in St Peterburg from 1962 to 1967. The artist's interest turned to such writers as Mihai Eminescu, Ion Druţă, Grigore Vieru, Dante, Longos and Paul Valery. The works of Gheorghe Vrabie are distinguished by the accuracy of the subject and the refinement of the execution.

Gheorghe Vrabie made a cycle of works called "Hipism" and together with his wife, Dorina Cojocaru, made several mosaic works.

He hosted personal exhibitions in Moldova and abroad. In 2000 he was awarded the Eminescu medal.

In 2010, Gheorghe Vrabie was decorated with the highest state honour of the Republic of Moldova, "Knight of the Order of the Republic".

On March 23, 2019, the Post of Moldova released the postal stationery envelope № U410 (1.75L), commemorating the 80th anniversary of Vrabie's birth. The envelope features a cachet with a portrait of Vrabie on a background of the State flag.

The envelope was designed by Vitaliu Pogolșa and was issued in 10,000 pieces.
In the January 2019 IMPS Newsletter, in the article “Recent Issue: “Eminent Personalities - Anniversaries & Commemorations” on page 5, we did not mention that a set of six matching postcards had also been released on the day of issue of the stamps (15.01.2019). We were simply not aware of their issuance.

The postcards were all designed by Elena Karacenţevă, the artist responsible for the postage stamps. Each postcard was printed in a quantity of 500 pieces and are 105mm x 148mm in size.

During 2019, the Post of Moldova plans to issue special cancellations on the actual anniversary dates of each personality. Local philatelists in Moldova then have the opportunity to realize maximum cards using each of the special cancellations.

(A) 15.01.2019: Dominica Darienco 100th birth anniversary (missed)
(B) 16.02.2019: Alexei Stârcea 100th birth anniversary (issued - see “Correction”)
(C) 16.03.2019: Alecu Russo 200th birth anniversary (issued)
(D) 19.07.2019: Gheorghe Asachi 150th death anniversary
(E) 12.09.2019: Constantin Stamati 150th death anniversary
(F) 12.11.2019: Gheorghe Asachi 150th death anniversary

Correction

In the February 2019 IMPS Newsletter, in the article “New Cancellation Issue: Alexei Stârcea 100th Birth Anniversary” on page 5, we stated the following: “Additionally, on this occasion, the Post of Moldova prepared a special postcard, from which, local philatelists in Chisinau realized a maximum card. Unfortunately, since the postcard was released after the postage stamps, the maximum card is not compliant with FIP maximaphily rules.”.

Since we have since received information from the Post of Moldova that the postcard for Alexei Stârcea was in fact issued on the same day as the postage stamp (15.01.2019) therefore maximum cards, realized from the postcard, are indeed compliant with FIP maximaphily rules. We apologize for any confusion.

10 Years Ago...

March 18, 2009 saw the release of the issue “Protection of Polar Regions and Glaciers”, with the unusual sight of Polar Bears and Penguins on Moldovan stamps.


20 Years Ago...

1999 got off to a very slow start for the philatelic department of Posta Moldovei. The first stamp issue was not until April 9. In March 1999, there were no philatelic releases of any kind.
Poll: Favourite Stamps 2018

Since December 29, 2018, two days after the last stamps were issued for 2018, IMPS has been running a poll on our Facebook Group. We asked our members “What were your favourite postage stamp issues from Moldova in 2018?” Voters could select from multiple options. Below are the rankings...

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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Issue Description</th>
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<td>Church Bells (Joint Issue with Ukraine)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>POSTCROSSING</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Personalities: King Mihai I of Romania. In Memoriam</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Happy New Year!</td>
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<td>Months of the Year by Their Traditional Folk Names</td>
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<td>22</td>
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Next Month...

**New Stamp Issue:**
Domestic Animals

**New Stamp Issue:**
EUROPA 2019: National Birds

**New Cancellations Issues**

**Article:**
Treasures of Moldovan Philately Part X: Europa 1993

And lots more...

Newsletters Archive...

The archive of previous IMPS newsletters is now on the site.

www.moldovastamps.org/info-newsletters.asp