

THE GOBI TIMES

An informal newsletter devoted to the
philately of Mongolia, Tuva, and Bhutan.

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Introduction This is the first issue of a newsletter I am hoping to publish as regularly as possible on the philately of Mongolia, Tuva, and Bhutan. Perhaps other countries in the Central Asian area will also be included later.

Foreword I welcome the enterprise of my friend, George Knowles, in producing this regular newsletter. Mongolia and Tuva were one unfashionable countries but their collecting has undergone a complete change in the last fifteen years. Fortunately, they have attracted the attention of a number of notable students and there has always been a very free interchange of information amongst this circle. This is reflected in the incomparably better state of today's general catalogues.

There is, however, a very great deal still to be learned. There is a limit to the amount of material which the magazines of the China and Russia specialist societies can be expected to print and these have been our chief media hitherto. A publication which can devote itself wholeheartedly to Mongolia, Tuva, and Bhutan must therefore be useful. I am sure the editor will be very pleased to receive notes and information from all readers.

JAMES NEGUS, F.R.P.S.I.

PART ONE, MONGOLIA

Notes on new and recent issues. Unless otherwise stated all issues are printed by the Hungarian State Printing Works.

1968 (20 June) International Human Rights Year

- 30m. emblem of Human Rights. Offset printed. Perf 11½
Unaddressed f.d.c. seen dated 20.6.68.

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1968 (1 July) 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Karl Marx

- 30m. Portrait of Marx.
50m. " " " Offset printed. Perf 12.
Unaddressed f.d.c. seen dated 1.7.68.

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1968 (11 July) Mongolian Paintings in the National Museum, Ulan Bator.

- 5m. A portrait by A. Sangatzenye of Sharab "the First Revolutionary Artist". Sharab designed the 1925 fiscals and 1926/7 definitives.
10m. "On remote roads". A painting by A. Sangetzenye.
15m. "Camel Calf". A painting by B. Avarzad.
20m. "The Milk". Again by B. Avarzad.
30m. "The Bowman". A painting by B. Gombosuren.
80m. "Girl sitting on the back of a Yak". A painting by A. Sangatzenye.
1.40m. A late 17th century painting of the Goddess Tara, "Cagan Dara Eke" by Janaivajara.

Offset printed. Perf 12.

- 4t. Miniature sheet Perf 11½. Painting by A. Sangatzenye entitled "Meeting"
4t " " " Imperf. " " " " " "

Unaddressed f.d.c.s. seen dated 11.7.68.

Note: Other than the painting by Janaivajara, all are by 20th century Artists.

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1968 (6 November) Anniversary of the Birth of Maxim Gorky.

- 60m. Portrait of Gorky. Offset printed. Perf 12.
Unaddressed f.d.c. seen dated 6.11.68.

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1968 (21 November) Paintings by European Masters in the National Gallery in Budapest to Commemorate the 20th Anniversary of U.N.E.S.C.O.

- 5m. "Madonna with Child". by Beltraffio.
10m. "St. Roch healed by an angel". by Moretto of Brescia.
15m. "Madonna and Child with St. Anne" by Macchietti.
20m. "St. John on Patmos" by Cane.
30m. "Young Lady with viola da gamba" by Kupetzky.
80m. "Study of a head" by Amerling.
1.40t. "The death of Adonis" by Furini.
4t. Miniature sheet. "Portrait of a Lady" by Renoir.

Offset printed. Perf 12.

Unaddressed f.d.c.s. seen appear to be dated 20.11.68. The '0' is rather unclear.

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1969 (25 March) Winners of Olympic Medals

- 5m. Paavo Nurmi, Finland.
 10m. Jessie Owens, U.S.A.
 15m. Francina Blankers-Keen, Netherlands.
 20m. Laszlo Papp, Hungary.
 30m. Wilma Rudolph, U.S.A.
 60m. Boris Sahlin, U.S.S.R.
 80m. Donald Schollander, U.S.A.
 1t. Akinori Nakayama, Japan.
 4t. Sheet. Jigjidin Munkbat, Mongolia.

Printed Offset in six colours. Set Perf 12. Sheet Perf 12½

Edition: 185,000 sets. 60,000 sheets.

Unaddressed P.d.c. expected soon.

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Forthcoming issues in 1969

April.	Mongolian Red Cross	2 values	500,000 sets.
April.	Mongolian Costumes	8 "	200,000 "
May.	Mongolian Flora & Fauna.	8 "	200,000 "
June.	Paintings III	8 "	190,000 " 40,000 sheets
?	30th Anniversary of Halkin Gol.	1 "	500,000 "
October.	Hunting Scenes	8 "	190,000 "
November.	Space Rockets	7 "	175,000 " 40,000 sheets

Acknowledgements to Philatelia Hugarica for the above information.

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The Mongolian Paintings set. An artistic point of view.

It must be remembered that in portraying paintings on stamps a great deal of detail and subtlety of colour is lost minisculizing the originals. This I feel may be especially so in the 17th Century Buddha painting, as the feeling of overwhelming size and splendour is lacking on the stamp. Still it is a beautiful work of art and by far the most pleasing painting of the set.

Gombozuren manages to achieve results similar to the jingoistic posters one sees on the Moscow - Kiev highway or in the posters portraying the youth of the Peoples Republic of China; even though the colours and arrangements may well be symbolic of Mongolian tradition.

Both Avarzads' works are rather poor in arrangement, colour, and subject, but on the other hand rather charming to look at, especially the 15m. which reminds me of a childrens short story illustration. The 20m. is unfortunately rather blurred and so it would be unfair to say more.

The Artist I like best is Sangatzohyo. His colour sequence and contents are beautiful and I would think his paintings must be very compelling and strong. I would very much like to see more of his works.

Perhaps arrangements could be made in the future for paintings from the Ulan Bator Museum to be shown in London. As far as I am aware nothing quite like Sangatzohyo's and Avarzad's works have been seen in Europe. If any readers have any suggestions to make on how to arrange for a collection to be shown in London, I would be delighted to hear from them.

Revision of Gibbens Catalogues

Jim Negus has been working in recent months with Basil Drennan on two projects of importance to readers of this newsletter. In 1963-64 the eminent specialist, Mr. S. Blekman, published two definitive catalogues (in Russian) of the stamps of Mongolia and Tuva. By comparison of these sources with other published materials Gibbens have now been supplied with (a) a new listing of Tuva and (b) a revised listing of Mongolia. Both the current listings are, in fact, the work of Messrs. Negus and Drennan, but various alterations have been made to them over the years by the publishers.

The new Tuva listing reinstates in S.G. the pictorials of the 1930s and includes the many other issues which Blekman brought to light. The Mongolia list has been checked and revised; what new information has become available has been incorporated.

The present intention of the publishers is to bring out the new listings in their next Part III Catalogue (1970 edition, due autumn 1969).

Jim reports that during this work he was struck by the mass of misprints and inaccuracies in the official Mongolian catalogue (Chuluungombe 1959, second edition 1965) and warns collectors to be careful in using that catalogue.

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MONGOLIAN STAMPS 'CANCELLED TO ORDER' - ISSUES of 1956-59

From studying quantities of c.t.o. stamps issued between 1956 and 1959 the following observations have come to light. Readers' remarks on c.t.o. stamps from this period and earlier would be most welcome.

In 1958 Mongolia arranged for Philatelia Hungarica, the Hungarian Stamp Trading Organisation, to distribute and publicize their stamps. In the Post Offices in Mongolia in 1958 quantities of stamps issued between 1932 and 1958 were still on sale. Many of these stamps were cancelled-to-order and sent to Philatelia Hungarica for world-wide stamp distribution.

Below I list the issues seen c.t.o. by myself with the dates of the postmarks where known:

1956 Anniversary	30 m. green	
	30m. Blue	Pmk "MHP" 9.2.59.
	40m. red	
	1t. train, flags.	
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1958 13th Congress	Pmk "MHP" 9.2.59	
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1958 Womens Federation	Pmk "MHP" 9.2.59	
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1958 Animals Ulan Bator Printing.		
	30m. blue-green	
	30m. turquoise-blue	Pmk "MHP" 9.2.59
	60m. yellow-orange	
	1t. light blue	
	1t. carmine	

1959 Animals. Budapest printing. Complete sets.

- a. "MHP" pmk. Date unknown. Perhaps 9.2.59?
- b. Budapest fascimile pmk. date 1.11.58

Note on the postmarks: The "MHP" postmark was the common postmark in use throughout Mongolia up to around 1959 when it was superceded by the lengthy "Mongol State Post" in its various forms. The "MHP" is at the top of the postmark with the town or district name at the bottom, in this case, Ulan Bator. The postmark used in Budapest to cancel stamps is similar in appearance to the common present day postmark, but is easily distinguishable by its clean look. The present fascimile canceller has 2mm figures, 3mm whereas the Ulan Bator one has 2mm figures. The canceller used in Budapest in 1958 was probably sent from Ulan Bator as it is the same dimensions as the Ulan Bator ones. I hope to give more details, with tracings of the various postmarks in a later issue.

Questions.

1. Was the Animals, Ulan Bator Printing, and Print issued c.t.o.?
2. What is the date of the Budapest Animals "MHP" pmk?
3. Has anyone seen the 1959 Youth 30m. issued c.t.o.
4. Do the rest of the 1956 Anniversary issue occur c.t.o.?

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DATES OF ISSUE OF MODERN MONGOLIAN STAMPS

Ascertaining the dates of issue of Mongolian stamps is very difficult and this includes even the post-1959 issues distributed from Budapest.

Unaddressed First-Day covers have been produced by Philatelia Hungarica since the first Hungarian printed (Animals) issue in 1958. These f.d.c.s. are cancelled in Hungary with the "Mongol State Post" fascimile canceller. Quite who decides when the First Day is to be, I do not know, but I suspect it to be Philatelia Hungarica. First-Day covers originating in Mongolia often have a different date to Budapest, and to make it even more muddling I have seen Budapest f.d.c.s. with different dates on. As an example the date of the 1959 Lunik III is 31.12.59 on most Budapest f.d.c.s. I have one dated 4.1.60.

It is quite possible that new issues often do not arrive in Mongolia in time to be released on the Budapest First Day date. Also it is unlikely that all values of a new issue are released together: Mongolian Post Offices are inclined to release stamps very haphazardly. The majority of f.d.c.s. originating from Mongolia are ones produced in Budapest with the Budapest "First Day" cachet and sent to Mongolia for addressing, the stamps being already affixed. Ulan Bator also have a "First Day", cachet, this being slightly different from the Budapest one, as follows below:

Budapest "First Day" cachet	19½ mm sides
Ulan Bator " " " "	19 mm sides

Jim Negus has come across several differences in recent First Day dates since working on the revision of Gibbons Catalogue. Two of the observed differences are:

1959 Lunik III. Ulan Bator. f.d.c.	31.12.59
Budapest "	30.12.59.
1966 45th Anniversary. Ulan Bator f.d.c.	10.7.56.
Budapest "	10.7.56.

The interesting thing is that the First Day dates in Gibbons are the same as the Budapest dates above, which of course is to be expected as Gibbons get their dates

from Budapest. Now, I asked Budapest about these differences, and they gave the First Day dates as the Ulan Bator dates above. In other words it looks as if the stamps did not arrive in time for the Budapest First day date and of course Budapest would have released their unaddressed f.d.c.s. to the philatelic trade with their fascimile postmark.

It would be interesting to hear from collectors who have Ulan Bator f.d.c.s. that have different dates to the Budapest ones.

Non-Budapest printed stamps. I only have one f.d.c., the 1959 Tulaga addressed to China, dated 1.5.59 (same date as Gibbens). I assume f.d.c.s. of the Mongolists' Congress exist, as a number of foreigners were staying in Ulan Bator for the Congress. Perhaps f.d.c.s. also occur with the other 1959 Ulan Bator-printed issues? I would be interested to hear from collectors if they know of these.

Will all collectors send the earliest seen dates of issues not produced by Budapest? We may then be able to build up a picture of dates of release. To start the ball rolling I list a few stamps with the earliest dates that I have seen:

1958 Ulan Bator-printed Animals issue. 30m. blue-green. 8.10.58.
 1958 Arms. 20m. red. 9.6.58
 1958. Wrestlers 50m. 24.5.58.

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NEW LIGHT ON THE SHORT-LIVED GENGHIS KHAN ISSUE OF 1962

In 1962 arrangements were made by the Government to celebrate the 800th Anniversary of the Birth of Genghis Khan (Chingis haan). A monument was to be unveiled and the usual entertainments held.

Without prior warning the Soviet Press published a scathing attack on Genghis Khan, and branded him a 'feudalistic warmonger' etc. A purge was carried out forthwith of officials connected with the festivities and all activities towards the celebrations ceased.

The set of stamps was apparently on sale about three days before being withdrawn. It is not clear whether they were on general sale throughout Mongolia, or perhaps just in Ulan Bator.

Philatelia Hungarica distributed small numbers of mint sets to dealers and then stopped. One assumes the remainders were destroyed. The issue arrived in England in August; dealers complained of small quantities and said that someone had 'cornered the market'.

In Mongolia this set is in great demand and apparently sets change hands at high prices, despite the issue not being listed in the Official Mongolian Catalogue, by Chuluungbo.

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ENGLISH-MONGOLIAN PART 1

Mongolian Peoples Republic Postage
 Central Post Office
 Mengel State Post

Б.Н.М.А.У. ШУУДААН
 ТӨВ ШУУДААН
 МОНГОН УМСЫН ШУУДААН

Registered
 Airmail
 Postage Pre-Paid
 Official
 Postcard
 Postage stamp
 Envelope, cover.

БАТАЛГААТЙ
 АГААРААР
 УНЭ-ТӨЛӨГДСӨН
 АЛБАНЫ
 ИЛЗЭЖИА
 МАЖК
 ДУГТУЙ

Next issue: Place names.

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In the next number of the Gobi Times I hope to make a start on sorting out the 1926 fiscal overprints, and give news on the Natsagdorj issue. Philatelia Hungarica have very kindly offered to give me details of forthcoming issues, and any relevant information on Mongolian postage stamps.

I should like to thank Messrs Jim Negus for his invaluable help in producing this newsletter and Alan Sanders for his transliterations.

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PART TWO

BHUTAN

POST OFFICES This is probably not a complete list; if any readers know of others will they please let me know, if possible with the date of the postmark?

<u>Common</u>	<u>Uncommon</u>	<u>Scarce</u>	<u>P.O.'s opened in 1968</u>
Phuntsholing	Wangdiphodrang	Garang	Derekha
Tashichhe-Dzong	Punakha	Triumphu	Gasa
Samchi	Byakar-Dzong	Sarjhang	Lingshi
Chirang	Chengmari	Lamdera	Dagapela
Sarbhong	Wangchukle-Dzong	Chapcha	Deethang
Sandrup Jongkhar	Kalikhola	Chimskothi	
Rinpung-Dzong	Mengar Dzong	Putlibir	
Sibsoe	Dagadzong	Tishig	
Tashigang	Shengong	Shee Lek Dok	
Gelegphu	Lhuntse	Pare	

I have seen all the Post Offices in the common and uncommon lists and all are currently in use. Rinpung Dzong is the post office for Pare. I have not seen any of the scarce Post offices. I would be grateful if readers with these postmarks in their collections could let me know the dates of the postmarks.

EXPERIMENTAL POST OFFICES The precis use of these is unclear to me, but I assume that they are used in trial areas to see whether there is enough mail to warrant a permanent post office. If this is the case the use of a canceller at several different places is very likely.

Identification of Experimental Post Office cancellers: normal double ring postmark, date in the centre between two horizontal lines. Above the top horizontal line the serial number, and at the top between the double lines, 'EX PTL PO'.

<u>Serial No.</u>	C.2353	
	C 2595	Chimakothi
	C 1778	
	C 2840	Lamidara
	C 2096	Tangsa District

T.P.O's, SCARCE P.O's etc. In the next issue of 'Gobi Times' I will list the scarce postal markings that I have seen. Perhaps readers could give me details of what they have so anything that I have no notes on can be included.

AIRMAILS I have little information on this subject, but what I have I detail below. Readers may be able to throw light on this subject.

On 23rd March 1968 the Indian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Morarji Desai, inaugurated the first Bhutan airfield at Pare. I assume that prior to this airmail was conveyed by helicopter.

Philatelic Air covers seen

1. "Per Royal Air Flight" 27.2.65 Tashichho Dzong to Phuntsholing, arriving 27.2.65
Handwritten cachet.
2. First Internal Aerial Flight 10.1.67". Printed f.d.c. picturing helicopter over hills and Dzong. Phuntsholing f.d.c. postmark on "Airmail" overprints. Dancers issue. 5 different routes:
 - a. Phuntsholing to Samdrup Jongkhar
 - b. " " Tashigang
 - c. " " Gelegphu
 - d. " " Wangchukle Dzong (Ha)
 - e. " " Samchi

Commercial Air Services I have no evidence to prove that mail is sent by air, although one assumes it is, as there is a regular passenger plane service between Calcutta and Bhutan. All covers I have examined addressed to Calcutta have taken 3-5 days. Often Airmail envelopes are used but this does not seem to signify anything, nor do the 'Airmail' stamps. I would be interested to hear what other collectors have found.

NEW ISSUES If readers would like regular listings of new issues I will oblige, but I am very half-hearted about it as new issues seem to be churned out in ever-increasing numbers from the Bahamas. If anyone has doubts whether all the issues are released in Bhutan, I think I can honestly say that they are, including imperfs. The Bhutanese apparently love their brightly coloured bits of paper.

The following is a list of issues that I have not seen on commercial mail, but only on philatelic:

1964 Winter Olympics	1968 Olympics
1966 Coins	1968 Paintings
1967 3-D Space	1968 Birds
1968 3-D Butterflies	1968 Human Rights

I expect to see quantities of the 1968 Olympics and Birds commercially used, but I am very sceptical whether I will see any of the 3-D stamps. They are a bit tricky

to affix to the envelope I've no doubt. I have seen everything pass through the post from philatelic contacts in Bhutan, including imperfs, miniature sheets and errors. I have seen all values of the 1967 Churchill issue in kiloware parcels but strangely never on complete covers.

1968 Grenoble overprint on Snowman issue. Two errors are known on all values: Overprint inverted and 'P' for 'R' in GR ENOBLE. I do not believe that these are 'made to order' errors as none have appeared in the usual 'errors' market. I have seen both errors, only on cover though from Bhutan.

Pre-1962 covers with ornamentation postmarks If any readers can translate Tibetan hieroglyphics I would be grateful if they could identify a number of these postmarks that I have in my collection. I am sure that many collectors would be very interested in details of these fascinating postmarks.

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As I am sure all readers know, the production costs of producing a small circulating publication are very high. The larger the circulation, the cheaper the production costs get, so the more one can spend on printing. So will all subscribers please inform any collector friends whom they think might be interested in taking this newsletter, to get in touch with me, so in time a proper binded publication can be produced.

Articles, notes etc for inclusion would be most welcome, also readers queries on anything to do with the philately of Mongolia, Tuva, and Bhutan. I shall publish any letters received that are suitable for inclusion in the newsletter unless asked not too: if the writer wishes his name and address to be included please say so.

Well, until the next issue of

'The Gobi Times',

best wishes,

George P. Knowles.

