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**Greenland Latest
 To Issue An AIDS
 Related Stamp**

On September 09, 1993, Greenland joined the list of countries that have released an AIDS awareness stamp. The simple, but colourful (red, yellow, green) design represents the AIDS virus as if viewed through a microscope.

In its information bulletin, the Greenlandic Post Office expresses its desire to participate in what it refers to as an international information campaign to help limit the spread of the disease through education.



**USPS CONFIRMS
 AIDS AWARENESS
 STAMP DETAILS**

The US Postmaster-General Marvin Runyon announced on September 01 that the USPS will be releasing an AIDS Awareness postage stamp in conjunction with World AIDS Day on December 01, 1993.

In his remarks, Mr. Runyon pointed out the need for awareness of this pandemic and backed it up further by indicating that the issue will carry AIDS Awareness messages on the sheet selvages and in the booklet formats.

The choice of the red ribbon (International symbol for AIDS Awareness) as the design of the stamp will certainly make it easily recognizable. Its interesting to note that the USPS is also giving limited access of the stamp design to AIDS charitable organizations for them to use as fundraisers on coffee mugs, T-shirts, key chains and the like.

However, designs on other AIDS related stamps do carry a much more graphic and potent realization of the devastation this disease can bring, (ie. Ethiopia 1307 or Brunie 422) or point out some very educational factors to the causes of AIDS, (ie. Kenya 559-562, or Turk. N. Cyprus 313).



SAN MARINO
 1162-1165 19SEP88

**THE FIRST AIDS
 AWARENESS STAMPS
 ISSUED 19 SEP '88
 SAN MARINO**

QUESTION CORNER

Q: Has any one country ever issued more than one set of stamps related to AIDS?

A: As a matter of fact, yes! In December (01) of 1988, Ethiopia released an overprint (1234-1237) in conjunction with World AIDS Day. Then, again in January (31) of 1991 a set of three (1307-09) was issued specifically designed with AIDS awareness graphics. And, yet again, a third issue on April 09, 1991 in conjunction with AIDS prevention and the Red Cross (Scott # 1314). Uruguay has also issued two distinct sets of stamps, Scott #1361-62 on December 01, 1990 for prevention of AIDS, and Scott #1408-09 on December 01, 1991 for World AIDS Day!

FACT OR FICTION ?

On the average, since the first AIDS stamp issue of 1988, there have been SIX new issues per year, worldwide.

FACT ! - Including the soon to be released US issue, close to 40 issues can be accounted for. According to our information (always subject to updates please!) the breakdown is as follows: 1988=8, 1989=7, 1990=10, 1991=9, 1992=3, and 1993=3. One must keep in mind that these figures are *issues*, not necessarily different countries and, that some countries have come out with more than one issue!

QUARTERLY QUOTE

"Make all things as simple as possible, but not one bit simpler." -Einstein

Your Two Cents Worth:

From our mailbag we'd like to share a few of your comments about our first issue of AIDS in STAMPS:

- <...I was impressed with the very attractive and professional format as well as the range of topics covered.> <Prince Edward Island>
- <...WOW!!! I received "AIDS on STAMPS Newsletter" today.> <New York City>
- <...a really splendid endeavour!> <Victoria, BC>
- <...A good start, keep up the effort.> <Florida>
- <...I'm looking forward to the next A.I.D.S. on Stamps Newsletter.> <Ontario>
- <...I am moved by your ambitious efforts, please count me among your supporters.> <Connecticut>
- <...What a fantastic idea! I am pleased to subscribe to your Newsletter.> <Vancouver>

THE STORY BEHIND THE RED RIBBON

As one who has been involved personally for some years now with AIDS Awareness I thought it would be appropriate (as a companion to the USPS announcement) to relate in this particular issue the story behind the red ribbon. [Editor's Note: 'AIDS Lingo versus Philatelic Jargon' will appear in a future issue]

The first red ribbons meant to symbolize AIDS Awareness were made by members of a group known as Visual AIDS. They were crafted in various fashions as if by a group at a quilting bee, working to their hearts content, creating what they hoped would be but a very simple, yet very visible 'memorial' to those affected by AIDS.

(See RIBBON page 4)

PHILADEMICS

In this issue we are featuring the first known set of stamps related to AIDS. It was issued by San Marino (September 19, 1988) on the occasion of the International AIDS Congress that was held in San Marino October 10th to 14th, 1988. These stamps carry a very subtle message and at the same time one of hope.

On the 250 Lira the AIDS virus is depicted as the roots of a tree, yet we are reminded that "from the roots of the disease (AIDS), life". A new way of life evolves as we establish new roots as our support system and join together to fight the virus.

The 350 Lira stamp presents the object of AIDS awareness: - "the destruction of AIDS." It is hoped that one day this virus can indeed be 'smashed' to oblivion.

As we examine the 650 Lira in this set we see the AIDS virus as if it were being protected inside a knot and that knot may hold the key if we can somehow loosen it! "The knotted cord underlining the difficulty in the research" as we try to unravel the mystery of the virus itself.

And finally on the 1000 Lira stamp, perhaps one of the most important keys to this entire pandemic, - Information. Through information we can definitely contribute to creating awareness, education, and support to and for those living with HIV/AIDS today!

The first set of AIDS awareness stamps, perhaps more powerful than we have realized, even as we proceed into this second decade of a very complicated, and still very puzzling search to an answer!

The information bulletin for this issue tells me there were only 300,000 sets printed. Do you have it in your collection?

CONNECTIONS

This section is established only as a supplementary to the AIDS on STAMPS Newsletter and will be compiled separately to be used as a 'directory' of goods /services available to persons interested in creating a broader awareness of AIDS through STAMPS and STAMPS through AIDS.

This supplementary listing will be published and included in the WINTER issue of the Newsletter.

If you wish to have your name/collecting interest, or service placed in this annual listing, please send us your information (maximum of 50 words) **no later than December 01.** Available only to annual subscribers.

ISSUES A thru Z

CAMEROON - this set of two (15F, 25F) was issued on January 15, 1991 and stresses the urgency to fight AIDS worldwide through education so as not to die from ignorance. Scott #s 859-860.

CAPE VERDE - two stamps (13\$00, 24\$00) geometrically depicts the global attack on the AIDS virus. Issued on February 20, 1991 and given Scott #s 592-593.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - a very busy set of three (5F, 70F, 120F) emphasizing the need for education at the community level. Issued on May 01, 1990 and given Scott #s 982-984.

GUESTSPEAKER

Editor's Note: The following is an opinion piece from one of our readers and is presented as submitted, and as the sole opinion of the author, Mr. Les Wright.

'THE AIDS EPIDEMIC ON STAMPS, AN OPINION.'

In 1981 I got sober, returned to graduate school, and was infected with the HIV virus. It would be several years before I would become aware that I had been infected. I also returned to one of my greatest passions from childhood - stamp collecting. Twelve years later, I have finished my PhD and am holding my first full-time teaching post. I have traveled an arduous road and have dealt with the onset of preliminary symptoms. At one point I abandoned my stamp collecting, under the panicked and, fortunately incorrect, impression that my days were numbered. I am still reasonably healthy, still sober, and returning, one more time to an active philatelic involvement.

My primary topical collecting interest today is AIDS on stamps. I have actively observed the all too painfully slow dawning of international awareness about the global HIV epidemic. It is with strong, mixed feelings that I witness "my" collecting area now coming into its own. Public education and awareness are long overdue; the epidemic could have been slowed or halted, but this was not to be. The 1980s for me was very much like watching a slow-motion movie of an approaching train wreck: all I could do was watch in horror.

I moved to San Francisco in 1979, knew the place before, during, and after the first wave of the AIDS hysteria. I have seen over a thousand loved ones, acquaintances, and familiar faces from around the Castro wither and die. I have contributed in a variety of ways to AIDS education,

emotional support for PWAs and the asymptomatic HIV-infected. I have done my own healing and grieving, in all too repetitious cycles of mourning and loss and spiritual rebirth.

After fourteen years of this I have recently relocated to the Boston area. And here I witness a phenomenon much closer to "the rest" of the world. Boston in 1993 is much like San Francisco in 1985. The state of denial is being shattered here. After so many years of AIDS being media news about mostly New York and San Francisco, large numbers of people are reaching terminal-stage illness. I am *not* saying awareness or illness have been absent: I am saying it is only now beginning to reach the staggering numbers that defy human comprehension.

In this sense, I see the relatively new phenomenon of AIDS awareness on stamps gaining momentum as a harbinger to the global community. It is tragic there has been such a 'delay' between the spread of the virus and governments' recognition of their duty to inform the public. AIDS on stamps is one small, but very powerful way of carrying this message until it sinks in. Beyond the first wave of scientific fact and scare tactics, I trust philatelic bureaus will discover the need to promote messages of grieving *and* hope for the future.

This space is reserved to hold a free mint copy of the CANADA AIDS awareness stamp. (Issue Date Yet Unknown)

POINT TO PONDER

One does not have to be infected, in order for one to be affected!

NEXT ISSUE - WINTER

- > CANADA UPDATE
- > TRENDS - NEW IN 1994
- > 1993 IN REVIEW
- > WORLD AIDS DAY EVENT

SSs, GUTTERS, SCs, & OPs

A SOUVENIR SHEET does, in fact, exist in the realm of collecting AIDS on STAMPS. This particular sheet was issued by ZAIRE, (#1252) 12Nov89 and features a single 150z value centered in the layout of a miniature global map depicting the necessity for fighting AIDS worldwide.

GUTTER PAIRS exist from at least two issuing countries, both of which offer very powerful and graphic messages in creating AIDS awareness. The Vanuatu set (547-50), issued 29Nov91, carries four different messages in three different languages: English, French, and German. The Kenya set (559-62) issued 31Oct91 very vividly gets across the reality of just how AIDS can be contracted.

A SOUVENIR CARD has also been issued in conjunction with an AIDS related stamp issue. The United Nations issued a 6"x8" souvenir card depicting all six stamps they released 16Mar90 to commemorate World AIDS Day on December 01, 1990. A brief message from the Secretary-General of the UN at the time, is included on the card.

OVERPRINTS have been issued on earlier releases, emphasizing World AIDS Day, from Bhutan (761-63), and Ethiopia (1234-37). Guyana (1984-88) bears different AIDS Prevention messages, and The Maldives (1307-08) bears the UN's World AIDS Day symbol.

HOW DO WE FUNCTION?

As this Newsletter is put out on my own time, initiative, and expense, I feel I must be able to recover at least a portion of my costs in some way. Therefore, to cover four quarterly issues (WINTER, SPRING, SUMMER, FALL,) your subscription fee of \$10.00 per year will see \$5.00 go to AIDS Charities (B.C.) and the other \$5.00 towards postage and production costs!

DID YOU KNOW?

<+> The somewhat famous 'Condom Stamp' from Argentina, (which we featured in our last FACT OR FICTION segment) has reportedly sold out completely, according to one of our suppliers!

<+> FRANCE has announced in its July 9, 1993 bulletin its plan to issue an AIDS related stamp in 1994 through its Europa series theme 'European Discoveries'. The stamp will deal with the discovery of the AIDS (SIDA) virus.

RIBBON (cont'd)

Once the colour (red as blood) had been decided, the simplicity of the design spoke for itself - an inverted 'V' for victory, because it was only too clear, at this point in time, that there was still no cure for AIDS and that AIDS was still the victor.

And where would this symbolic ribbon make its debut? - The Tonys, in May of 1991 captured an audience whom innocently were unaware of this newborn awareness, as was later to be found, on an international scale.

Today, the red ribbon appears in many versions and styles, from brooches, lapel pins, and greeting

cards to T-shirts, and as recently announced, a postage stamp. Yet, may we remember the words of Mr. Moore of Visual AIDS: The ribbon is not something to be bought or sold. For some it's like a prayer, for some it's like a vote; and we're not interested in selling indulgences or imposing a poll tax."

When you wear it, wear it proud, and wear it from the heart; wear it as if it were your very own!

CINDERELLA ISSUES

Although we don't have too much information in this area yet we do welcome any news on such items for future reference.

Two Vancouver artists, Rosemary Gahlinger-Beaune and Ed Varney, produced limited-edition sheets of 24 different artists' creations as a fundraiser for the AIDS Committee of London, Ontario, in memory of Michael Bidner (graphic artist/collector) who died of AIDS in 1989.

"The Stamp" Desert AIDS project of Palm Springs, California features the Join Hands Conquer AIDS (also known as AIDS Awareness Stamp/Seal) launched a very successful program to help several California AIDS Service organizations. The Stamp comes in sets of 5 sheets of 24 per sheet.

Another project in New York has brought about the creation of a set of 6 seals known as 'STAMP OUT AIDS' as a means of raising funds to support PWAs.

In recent correspondence from the editor of the Lambda Philatelic Journal in Texas, the envelope bore a triangular sticker with 'FIGHT AIDS NOT PEOPLE WITH AIDS'

And, finally from Zimbabwe, the Lions Club of Khumalo seal with the wording 'AIDS/Don't die/of/ignorance' has been reported by several collectors in recent correspondence.