

DX PHILATELIA

By Don Jensen

■ Maybe you figured stamp collecting was kid stuff—you know, like steaming scraps of carmine and ultramarine stickem from old envelopes, sorting stamps by country and hinging them in leather-bound albums. If so, you're as out of date as Uncle Hiram's knickers.

The trend today in the ancient hobby of philately is topical collecting. Now, enthusiasts specialize in stamps picturing some specific theme, such as flowers, birds, transportation . . . or radio.

No, we're not trying to convert you. Chances are if you've been bitten by the DX bug, you'd rather fight than switch. But many SWLs have found they can double their fun by collecting postage stamps with radio or electronic themes as a supplement to their shortwave listening hobby. Take a good look at the stamp on your next QSL card. You just may find a surprise bonus stuck up there in the corner.

Your collection of radio philatelia can be as broad or as narrow as you wish. Since the early 1920s, scores of countries have issued stamps showing almost every aspect of electronics. Some honor broadcasting pioneers or scientists whose discoveries made electronics history. Others commemorate anniversaries of radio milestones, the establishment of a country's first station or admission to the International Telecommunications Union. To DXers, perhaps the most interesting are those that show actual shortwave stations.

As a starting point for your collection, how about the 5¢ Voice of America stamp, issued by our government in February to mark the 25th anniversary of the nation's radio voice to the world? Your post office



This 1960 Saudi Arabian series celebrates the development of telecommunications in that eastern country.



Radio Japan was founded in 1935, when its government was embarked on its expansionist East Asian Co-Prosperity moves. Twenty-five years later, in June 1960, Japan issued this 10 yen, rose-carmine anniversary stamp showing R. Japan's waves encircling the earth.



Radio amateurs got a boost when the U.S. Post Office printed this stamp several years ago. It shows an oscilloscope display and a radio dial.

Though better known for roulette than radio, Monaco issued a series of multicolored stamps in December 1951 honoring Radio Monte Carlo. The shortwave station's tower rises from the mountains behind the playground of the Roman Sea.



On March 13, 1959, Russia issued two stamps to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Popov, the scientist they credit with discovering the principles of radio. The multicolored 60-kopek stamp shows the famed trellis tower radiating the word peace in five languages. The graceful tower was built in 1922 for Moscow's first station, a 12-kW transmitter said then to be the most powerful in the world. Today it's used for TV. The use of Popov's wireless for rescue work at sea is shown in the black, brown, and blue-gray 40-kopek issue. The stamp depicts the rescue of some shipwrecked Czarist Russian fishermen in 1900.



West Germany's Berlin hosted the Funkausstellung 1963, a radio exhibition, and issued this blue, ultramarine, and gray 20-pfennig stamp. The city's symbol, the Berlin bear, beckons visitors to the exhibit.



The Comores, a group of French islands off the east coast of Africa, printed a pair of stamps in December 1960 to commemorate the opening of the Radio-diffusion Television Francaise station at Dzaoudzi. The 20-franc stamp shows a view of Dzaoudzi and radio symbols (antenna, coil, and ground). The 25-franc issue lists this rare DX station's shortwave frequencies and French language identification slogan.



A four-stamp block of Voice of America 5c stamps issued by the U.S. in the early part of 1968.



Strange as it seems, Communist Rumania issued this 40-bani stamp for a U.S. space communications development, the satellite that on Aug. 19, 1964 first relayed television programs of the Olympic Games across the Pacific from Tokyo. The purple stamp also shows television antennas and the five interlinked rings that symbolize the world Olympics.



Though usually used for telecommunications work, the transmitter at Bridgetown, Barbados, on occasions is used for broadcasts of cricket matches and horse races to the more remote Caribbean islands. A map of the island and the station's wireless mast, along with a portrait of King George VI, are shown on this \$1.20, olive and carmine colored stamp issued in May 1950.

might still have a few of these on hand. If not, write to the Philatelic Section of the Post Office Department, Washington, D.C. and ask for an order blank. If the stamp is still listed, you can have it for 5¢ a copy.

The inauguration of the BBC's relay station on tiny Ascension Island was the occasion for the issuance of a special commemorative in 1966. Europe's original swinging pop-music station, Radio Luxembourg, is depicted on a dark lilac, 3-franc stamp is-

sued in August 1953. A year earlier, Iran printed a 10-rial stamp on the 30th anniversary of the introduction of radio broadcasting to that country.

Among the older issues are Guatemala's, marking the beginning of radio-telegraphy in Central America, and a 9¢ green, commemorating Marconi's first transatlantic radio message, printed by Newfoundland when that Canadian province still had its own postal service. Both stamps are over 40 years old and are rare.

These stamps, plus the others shown and listed, will get your collection off to a good start. An hour or so spent studying one of the standard stamp catalogs will give you many more to look for. Of course, your local stamp dealer can offer a lot of help, too.

One final tip — mounted and framed, your radio stamp collection makes a great wall decoration in your DX den. ■

One sure way to build a specialized stamp collection is to enlist the aid of a local or mail order stamp dealer. The stamps listed in our table are inexpensive and offer a good start. When purchasing stamps it's best to refer to them by their "Minkus World Wide Stamp Catalogue" number.

| Country | Catalog No. | Stamp Theme | Year Issued |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Argentina | 824 | ITU Radio Conference | 1954 |
| Brazil | 790 | Inter-American Radio Conference | 1945 |
| Brazil | 1105 | Modern antenna at Brasilia | 1960 |
| Bulgaria | 769 | Radio towers | 1947 |
| Bulgaria | 1239 | Transmitting tower | 1959 |
| Cameroons | 463 | VHF relay station at Edea | 1963 |
| Czechoslovakia | 1214 | Antenna | 1958 |
| Dominican Republic | 526 | Communications emblem | 1945 |
| Dominican Republic | 645 | Modern communication system | 1956 |
| Falkland Islands | 144 | 50th Anniversary of station VPC | 1962 |
| Rhodesia/Nyasaland | 20 | VHF antenna mast | 1959 |
| France | 534 | Radios for the Blind Fund | 1938 |
| Germany | 157 | Radio station at Nikolassee | 1952 |
| Honduras | 318 | Radio station | 1929 |
| Japan | 539 | Anniversary of broadcasting in Japan | 1950 |
| Korea | 359 | 10th Anniversary of admission to ITU | 1962 |
| Malagasy | 530 | Aerials at Tananarive | 1963 |
| Paraguay | 1019 | Antenna—Progress series | 1961 |
| Poland | 676 | Radio tower | 1949 |
| Russia | 1456 | Radio Day | 1949 |
| Sweden | 441 | Modern design radio tower | 1953 |
| Taiwan | 483 | Microwave antenna | 1961 |
| Tunisia | 714 | Radio antenna tower | 1962 |
| United Arab Republic | 689 | Radio communications | 1959 |
| Vietnam | 35 | 1st Anniversary of admission to ITU | 1952 |