

# PHILATELIC PURSUITS

by Mark Joseph Jochim

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## — The Philately of COVID-19: Truths, Lies and Rumors —

Posted on  2020-04-12 by Mark Joseph Jochim



I believe the first reports I heard about the coronavirus now commonly known as COVID-19 was sometime in early January by way of a stamp trader in Suzhou, China. He indicated a possible delay in sending a few philatelic items to me due to having to enter quarantine. Not long after, the press here in Phuket, Thailand, began predicting lower numbers of Chinese tourists for the upcoming Lunar New Year celebrations. Phuket has a huge number of citizens with Chinese ancestry and our largest festivals each year are rooted in Sino Buddhist culture.

By mid-February, COVID-19 was widespread in South East Asia as the pandemic took hold. I was already familiar with its cousin, SARS, having been caught in Beijing, China at the height of that crisis and spent much of the last period of the disease in Shanghai and

Hong Kong (including “ground zero”, the Metropole Hotel in Kowloon). This coronavirus became a worldwide threat not long after and the death toll took on frightening levels in places such as Iran and Italy.



*Several planned items of COVID-19 postal stationery, including this pre-stamped envelope, were scheduled for release on 7 April but postponed along with the stamps.*









*One of two different sheet layouts announced for China's COVID-19 stamps. The initial announcement using this design was announced by China Post on 31 March for release on 7 April but was soon postponed due to complaints over some of the design details.*

The first philatelic rumblings related to COVID-19 began early in March with the online appearance of a pair of stamps, said to be slated for release sometime in April. It soon transpired that these were simply preliminary designs and unpopular ones at that. Eventually, a second design appeared in forums and social media groups and an official release was announced by China Post in late March. Just a few days before its scheduled 7 April issue, the stamp designs were deemed unsuitable and recalled. I have written two articles about [the announced design](#) and [its subsequent postponement](#) here on Philatelic Pursuits and you can read them by following the links. The new design has now been announced with some subtle differences from the original and will be issued on 11 May.





*Spot the differences: The original is above, the redesign below. How many changes can you find?*





*On 17 March, Iran released the world's first official postage stamp on the COVID-19 theme, an entry in its National Heroes series.*

On 17 March, the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a single stamp in its National Heroes series, entitled "Frontline Fighters of the Coronavirus." This was the first stamp to be



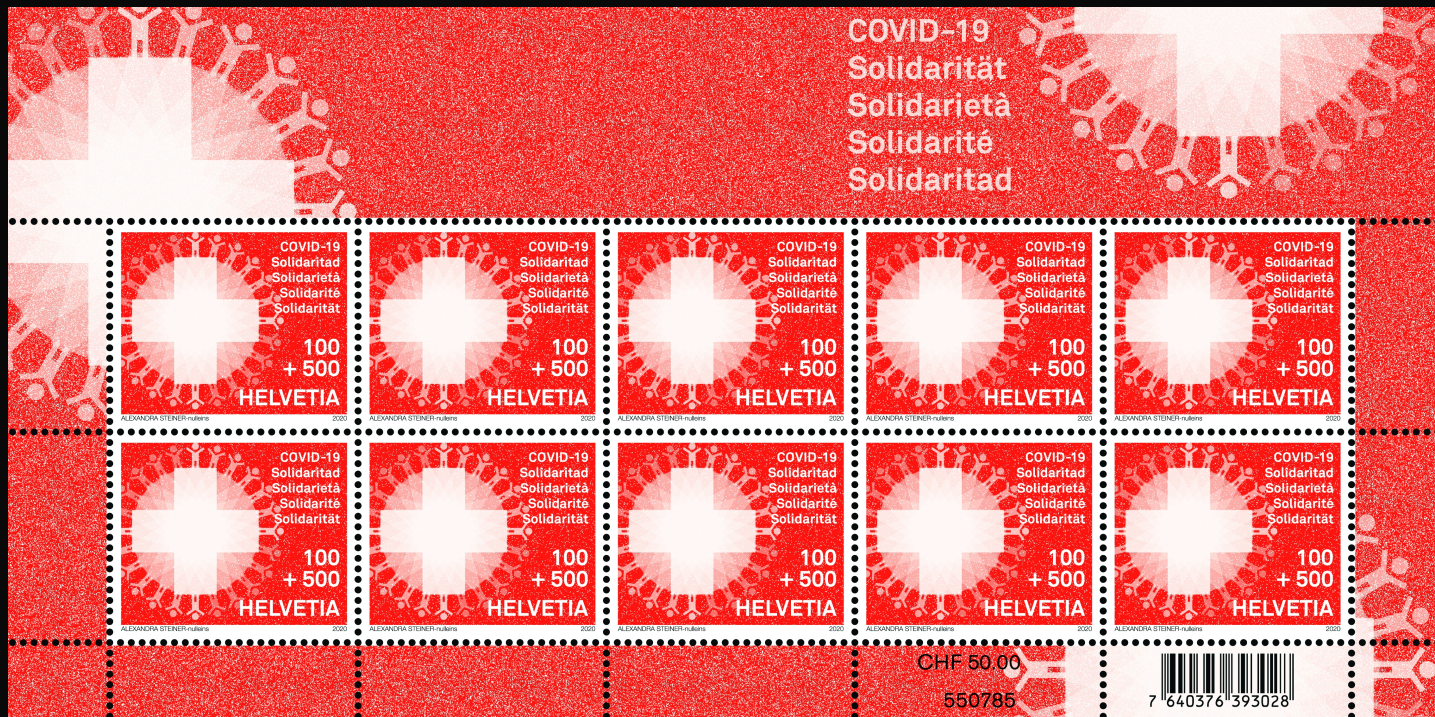
released in what is shaping up to be a popular topical subject.



*Vietnam's COVID-19 stamps were issued on 31 March 2020.*



Vietnam released a pair of stamps under the title “Prevention and Control of the Coronavirus Covid-19” on 31 March in a variety of formats (perforated and imperforate stamps, sample overprints and maximum cards) but all were printed in very limited quantities.



*Sheet of 10 COVID-19 Solidarity semi-postal stamps issued by Switzerland on 6 April 2020.*

In Europe, Switzerland announced and issued a semi-postal on 6 April, only available online and in full sheets with the surcharge going to people who urgently need help now. The money will be split between Swiss Solidarity and the Swiss Red Cross.

On 23 April, it was reported that Correios Brazil will release a set of five stamps in June but no design images have yet been publicized. On 25 April, the website for the Isle of Man Post Office added a graphic and a dead link mentioning an eight-stamp set “celebrating frontline workers” under the hashtag #CarryUsThrough. Two days later, they began pre-sales for eight gummed stamps and eight self-adhesive ATM labels that **were released on 4 May**.



## Coins Collections

## Other Collections

## Year

## Themes



Delivery and Returns



Order before 10am for  
same day despatch



## #CarryUsThrough

An eight stamp collection  
celebrating our front line  
workers

*Screenshot of the Isle of Man Post Office website, 26 April 2020.*

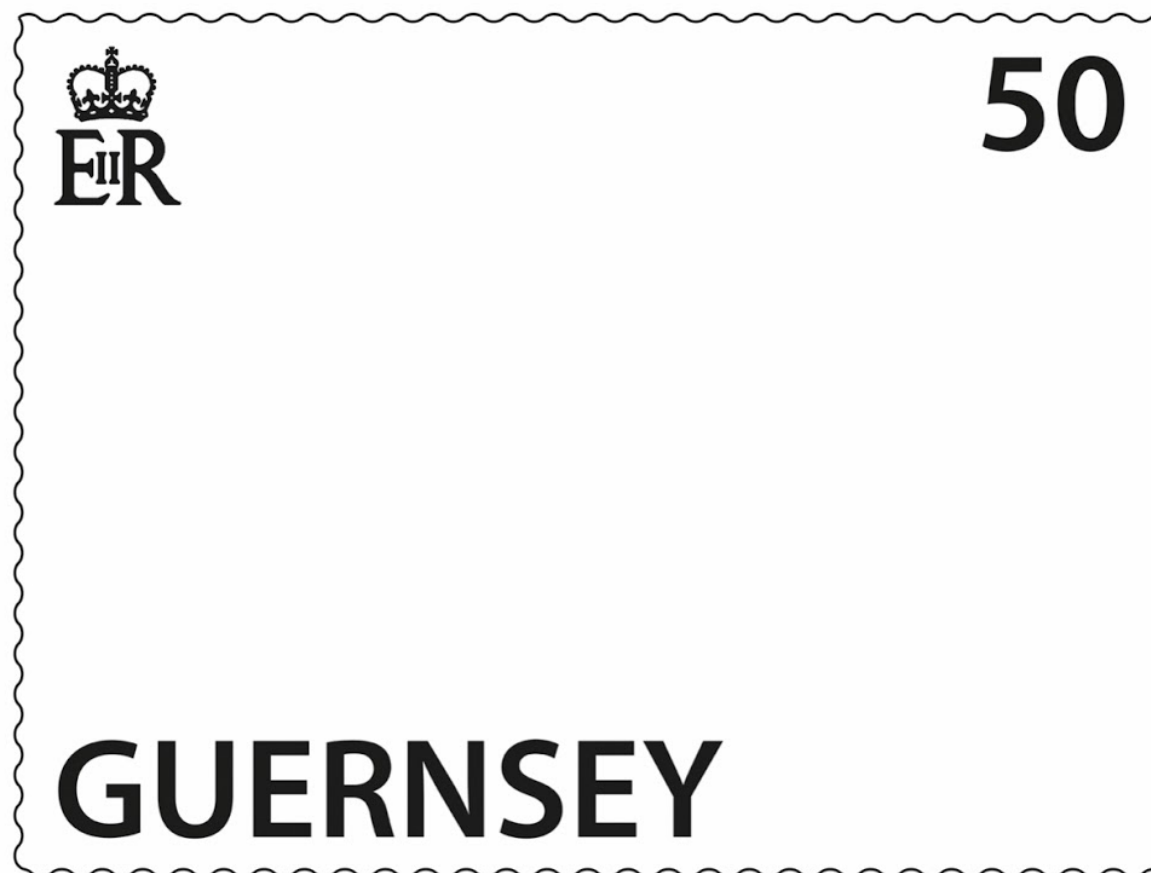


*First day cover for the Isle of Man #CarryUsThrough set of eight stamps released on 4 May 2020.*

The Guernsey Post Office has announced COVID-19 stamps will be issued for the Bailiwick as well as the island of Alderney later in the year. They have created a contest for children to design the stamps. The deadline for entries was 15 May.

## Local children invited to put their stamp on #GuernseyTogether charity competition

• May 4th, 2020



Child's Name..... School year..... Age..... Island..... Contact Name..... Tel..... Email.....



Guernsey Post is delighted to announce the launch of a competition inviting local children across the Bailiwick to create a piece of artwork, which could be selected to feature on a special set of 12 stamps on the theme #GuernseyTogether. All proceeds of sale from the stamps will be donated between two Covid-19 local charities.

Bridget Yabsley, head of philatelic at Guernsey Post, explained: - "We are currently experiencing a global health pandemic as a result of Covid-19, and we would like to try and create something positive during these unprecedented times.

"We're looking for children to create designs for our #GuernseyTogether stamp competition that relate to the current pandemic in a positive way. Perhaps your child has painted colourful rainbows displayed in your windows to show support for essential workers, or they have been involved in something like baking, or helping with donations, to keep spirits up within the community. If so, we'd love for them to create a design that would translate well onto one of twelve postage stamps, which we're planning to release later this year. The stamp designs will be subject to approval from Her Majesty, The Queen.

"We'll award each child a £100 voucher from a local retailer if their design is chosen to feature in the set; all proceeds from the sale of the stamps will be donated equally between the Guernsey COVID19 Response Appeal and the Social Investment Fund – COVID19 Community Charity Appeal, so please encourage your children to get involved in this worthwhile initiative."

The competition is open to all children in school years 1-12 in Guernsey, Sark and Herm; a second competition is being launched in Alderney.

***Side one of a two-sided application for a children's contest to design Guernsey's COVID-19 themed stamp issue. There is a similar contest for the island of Alderney.***



***Liechtenstein: di.Marke.li Personalized Sheet – COVID-19. Not an official Liechtenstein Post release although the stamps have postal validity. Printed mid-March 2020.***

There are also several semi-official releases that have surfaced. One of these is a personalized miniature sheet created through Liechtenstein's [dieMarke.li](https://di.marke.li) service. Called



a **Briefmarkenblock**, the stamps are valid for postal use but it is not an official Liechtenstein Post release. It was first seen in online stamp groups in mid-March.







*Semi-official COVID-19 personalized stamp sheet issued in Indonesia on 7 April 2020 for World Health Day.*

Similar is a [personalized sheet](#) from Indonesia. This one was created in a limited edition of just 1,000 copies which will be donated to COVID-19 charities and had a first day of sale date coinciding with World Health Day on 7 April. The sheet contains two stamp designs.



*Images for “commemorative” COVID-19 stamps from Indonesia appeared online in mid-April 2020 but have not been confirmed as an actual official release.*

A second pair of COVID-19 stamp images appeared online on 12 April, claimed to be “commemorative” stamps but there is no mention of these on POS Indonesia’s website or on the postal administration’s social media accounts. Official confirmation was received by myself on 14 April and another individual on 15 April, although details are still sketchy as per a release date, sheet format, etc. [The associated article](#) will be updated as more information is forthcoming. As of 7 May, there has been no further news on this.



*Personalized stamp created by the Cadiz Philatelic Society using Correos Spain's Trusello service, 13 April 2020.*

Several local stamp clubs in Spain are beginning to produce their own personalized stamps on the COVID-19 theme. Appearing online in mid-April have been designs by the



Cadiz Philatelic Society and the Calahorra (Rioja). Philatelic Society using the **Tusello service of Correos**, the Spanish postal service. According to their website,

*"The TUSELLO service makes it possible to buy sheets of 25 stamps online, from the Correos Virtual Office.*

*This service means that you can transform images into real Correos postage stamps. You can also order personalised stamps with a QR image, generated from your MP4 video file.*

*Make your direct marketing mailings more exclusive, promote your business, products, logos and events, or enhance your personal communications and celebrations (baptisms, first communions, weddings, etc.), or create your own collections (coat of arms, landscapes, pets, monuments, etc.).*

*Send in the design online.*



*Personalized stamp created by the Calahorra (Rioja). Philatelic Society in Spain to mark the COVID-19 pandemic, 13 April 2020. Image from Correos Spain.*

*The stamps are self-adhesive and presented in sheets of 25 stamps, produced by the National Mint.*

*The stamps measure 28.8 x 40.9 mm.*

*The stamps are valid in Spain and abroad (taking into account postal charges in the country of destination).*

*There are up to four types of postal charges (A, A2, B and C) according to the destination.*







*Personalized COVID-19 stamp used on a cover mailed from Wuxi City, China in early April 2020.*

Several personalized coronavirus stamps have also been seen coming from China.



Stamps Dream තිර්මාණය කර ආදර්ශ මුද්දරයකි.

*Design claimed to be intended for official release by Sri Lanka Post circulated online in mid-March 2020 but ultimately was revealed to be a fake, created by a local stamp dealer.*

A few fakes have surfaced as well. A design claimed to be from Sri Lanka circulated online in mid-March but emails to the postal administration revealed that there are currently no plans to issue a coronavirus-themed stamp.



*Turkey personalized COVID-19 stamp. Not an official release.*







*Possible COVID-19 stamp from Lebanon. Its release has not yet been confirmed by Liban Post.*

Similarly, there have been images shared online of stamps supposedly from Turkey and Lebanon that have not yet been confirmed to be official releases. The Turkish design may be from another personalized sheet. The website of Liban Post is currently secured behind firewalls due to cyber-attacks and a stamp release cannot yet be confirmed.





*Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH Pošta): Coronavirus COVID-19. Possibly scheduled for release on 10 April 2020 but not yet verified.*

The next confirmed release was due on 10 April by **BH Pošta**, one of three postal administrations that release stamps for Bosnia Herzegovina but it is not yet known whether the stamp was released on that date or not. A perusal of their website today (12 April) revealed no mention at all of the stamp.

What else is out there?

Well, plenty.



*Coronavirus-themed postal cards from China with COVID-19 meter postmarks.*





ขอเชิญคนไทยทุกคน  
เขียนความห่วงใย ส่งกำลังใจผ่านไปรษณียบัตร  
ถึง..บุคลากรทางการแพทย์  
และคนที่คุณรัก สู้ภัย COVID-19



ขอรับไปรษณียบัตร และฝากส่งได้ที่บูรุษไปรษณีย์  
หรือไปรษณีย์ไทยทั่วประเทศ...**เริ่มแล้ววันนี้!**

**ฟรี!**



*Thailand: 2-baht standard postal card given to customers for free to write to relatives, friends, and medical personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic. This one has three related hand-stamps applied.*

There are already a few forms of postal stationery available including a nice set of post cards from China which can be obtained with special coronavirus meter stamps. Thailand Post was offering free pre-stamped postal cards prior to widespread provincial lockdowns; a few of these cards have surfaced bearing various rubber stamp markings applied by local post offices and collectors.

Postal markings in the form of official postmarks, unofficial handstamps, delayed and disinfected/fumigated chops and others have become a steady stream shared around social media.







*Royal Mail markings from three different sorting centers honoring the National Health Service, promoting the COVID-19 preventative measure of "Stay Home".*

Perhaps the best known of these are ink jet markings from Royal Mail in Great Britain offering support for members of its National Health Service (NHS). These began to be applied to mail in late March and have been seen from at least three different major sorting centers.



*Pictorial COVID-19 cancellation  
scheduled for Croatia but  
cancelled by an earthquake.*

A special pictorial cancellation had been scheduled by Croat Post to be used on 25 March in Zagreb. However, a powerful earthquake struck on 22 March, destroying much including the Central Post Office.

# Slogan Die Designs - Here With You

07 - 19 APRIL



#herewithyou



20 APRIL - 03 MAY



04 - 17 MAY



#herewithyou

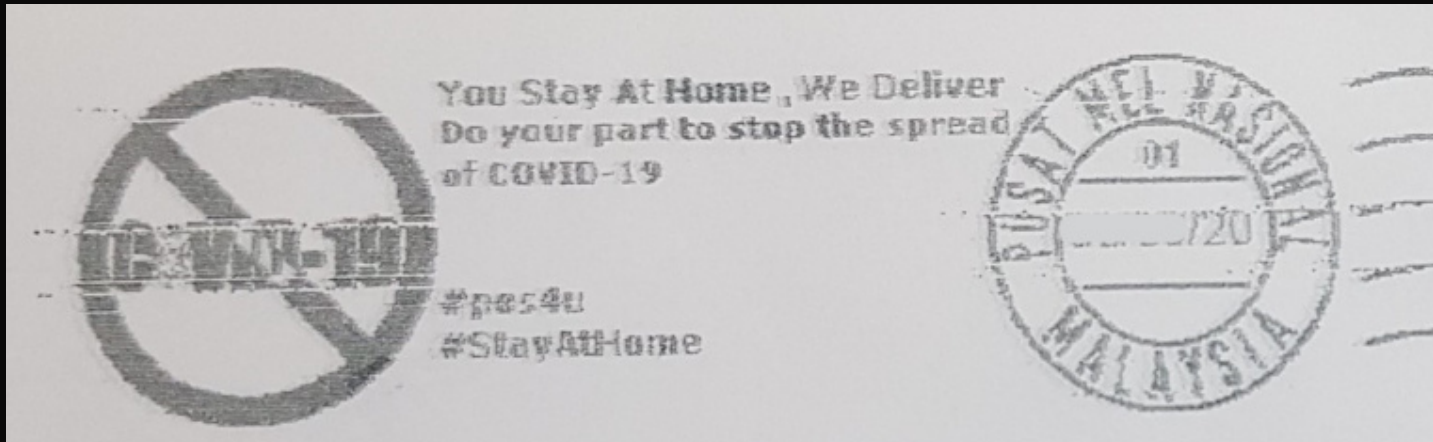


#herewithyou | Stay home, stay safe

*Slogan cancellations to be used by Singapore Post during April and May 2020.*



Singapore Post is applying pictorial cancellations to mail with three different COVID-19 designs scheduled to be used between 7 April and 17 May.

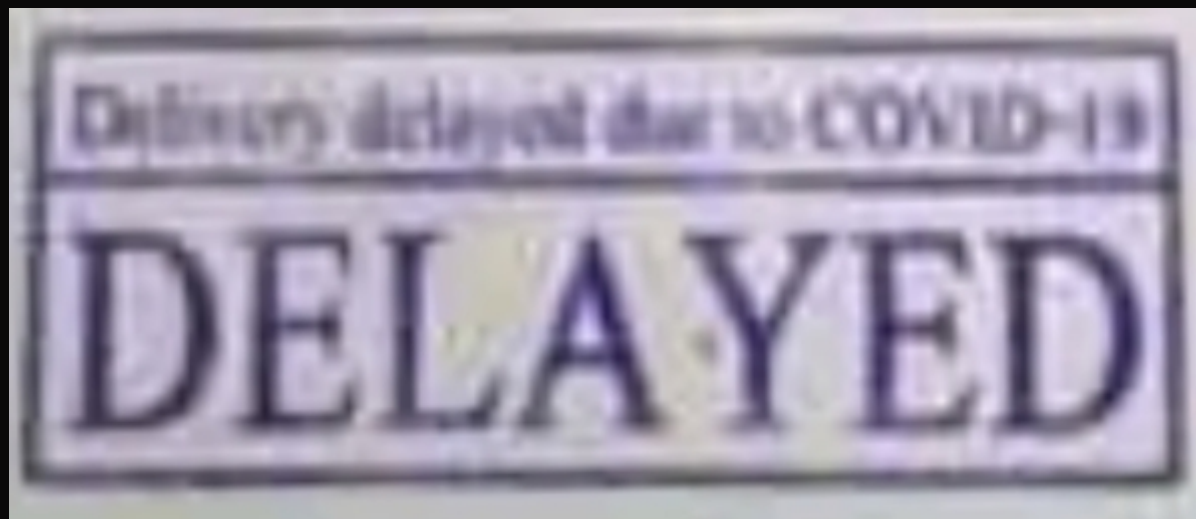


*Anti-COVID-19 slogan cancellation used by POS Malaysia in March and April 2020.*

POS Malaysia is also applying a COVID-19 slogan cancellation to its processed mail.

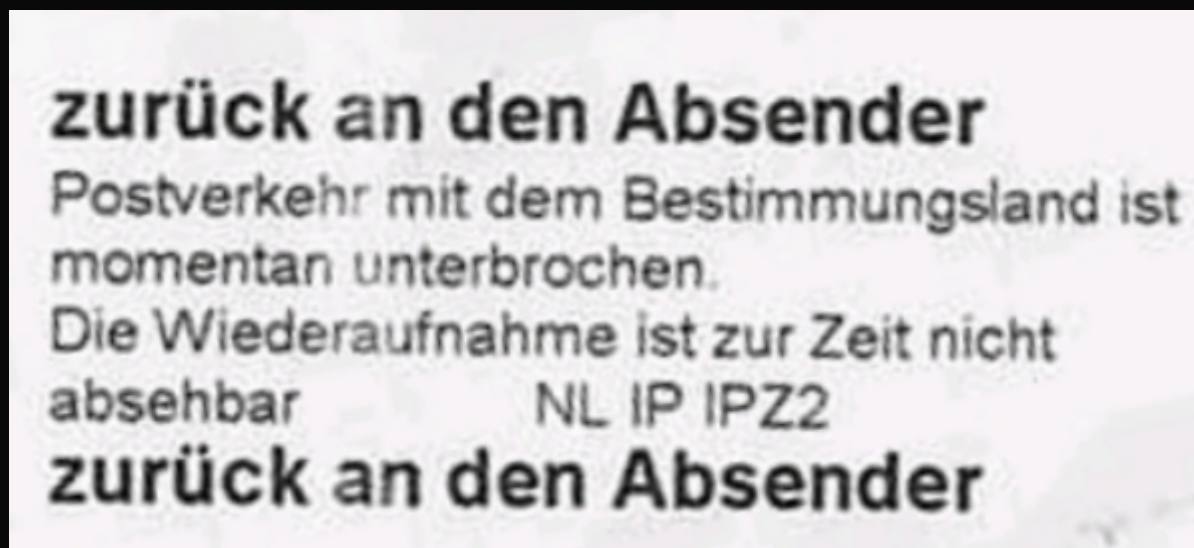


Vietnam has applied a pictorial postmark in red ink on some covers bearing February's Love stamp as well as its COVID-19 release. This is not a first day of issue marking.



***Marking applied to first day covers being held by North Korea. Covers and regular mail will resume delivery following the COVID-19 crisis.***

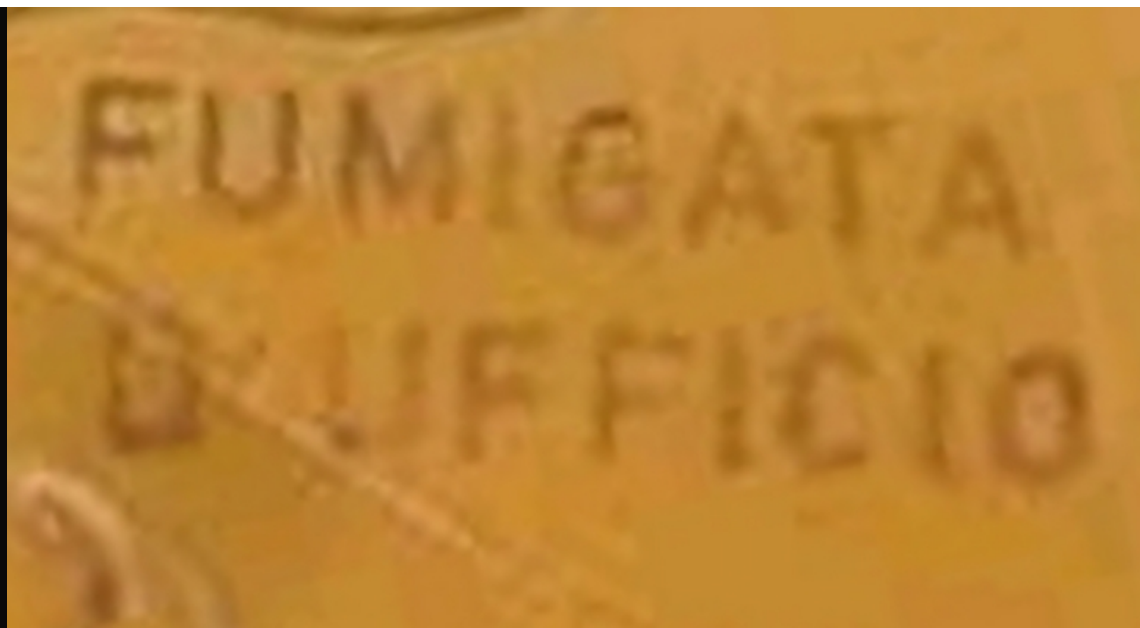
A number of "Delayed in Transit" markings are surfacing as well. The major distributors for North Korean stamp issues are in China and mail cannot be currently sent between the two countries. First day covers for those stamps released during this crisis are having special hand-stamps applied explaining the delay.



Germany is beginning to return international mail to the sender as Deutsche Post has suspended operations. The sticker pictured above is being applied to mail sent to Germany and reads:

***"Postal traffic to this country is interrupted. Returning to normal is not predictable. Return to sender."***





*A parcel mailed by a stamp dealer from Greensboro, North Carolina, on 2 March 2020, arrived at its destination in Italy with several “Fumigata / D’Ufficio” (Official Fumigation) markings.*



*Postal markings applied to Disinfected Mail in China during March/April 2020.*

A “fumigated mail” marking has been seen on envelopes returned from Italy as well as a few “sanitized” markings from China.



*Private chop related to the coronavirus seen on a cover from China in late March 2020.*





*Pictorial (private?) chop from China noting the first day of use for the new Health mobile phone application.*



*Special postmark noting China's National Day of Mourning for COVID-19 Victims on 4 April 2020.*



*Pictorial cancellation used by Hanzhong City, China, for World Health Day on 7 April 2020.*





*Prevention of the Coronavirus rubber stamp cachet from Wuxi, China.*

It may be quite some time before the vast majority of Chinese markings are known outside of Southeast Asia. Predominately pictorial, they often announce measures taken in the fight against the virus such as the initiation of the health-check mobile phone application.



*Commemorative COVID-19 cover with pictorial cancellation issued by the Karela Postal Circle, India, on 21 April 2020.*



KL -09/2020



SLOW THE SPREAD

# PRESIDENT TRUMP'S CORONAVIRUS GUIDELINES FOR AMERICA

PRST STD  
ECRWSS  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
USPS  
PERMIT NO. G-10

Postal Customer



For more information, please visit

**CORONAVIRUS.GOV**

MARCH 16, 2020

*President Donald Trump's direct-mail postcard, giving guidelines for battling the coronavirus COVID-19. Mailed to all U.S. households during late March and early April 2020.*

Another addition to a coronavirus collection could be the direct-mail postcard sent to every household in the United States under the name of President Donald Trump in late

March and early April.

This is, of course, a developing topic(al). There will be many more stamps to come issued using the Coronavirus COVID-19 theme as well as additional interesting postal markings and other ancillary items to seek out.



*Artist's rendition of a first day cover using the first preliminary design to be "leaked" for a COVID-19 stamp issue by China. This original design proved very unpopular but is not much different than the officially announced design, which was ultimately recalled and postponed.*

Many of us collectors are currently unable to go to work and sit sequestered in our homes with plenty of time to devote to our hobby. Where I live in Phuket, Thailand, we are basically cut off from the outside world other than the Internet and television. I cannot wait to see what treasures the postal carrier brings me once mail service begins anew.

Please, if you come across any additional Coronavirus-related postal history or philatelic creations, share them in the comments below.

Stay home and stay safe.

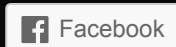




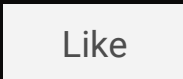
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← New Issues 2020: Iran (COVID-19)

New Issues 2020: Tunisia (Lina Ben Mhenni) →

## 4 thoughts on “The Philately of COVID-19: Truths, Lies and Rumors”

1.



*FADAIRO BAYO* says:

2020-04-17 at 08:08

Very educative. I gained a lot.

★ Loading...

Reply

2.



*Nasir Javaid Chaudhry says:*

2020-04-20 at 15:42

A very well researched Article, missed out a Souvenir Cover designed privately in Pakistan

★ Loading...

Reply

3.



*omarcarrillo76 says:*

2020-04-26 at 01:31

Excellent!!!!

★ Loading...

Reply



Pingback: COVID-19: An Incomplete Philatelic Catalogue (Part 1) – Philatelic Pursuits

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April 2020

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						18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25

« Mar May »

## Archives

Select Month

## The Stamps of 2020 New Issues

Today June 2020



Week

Month

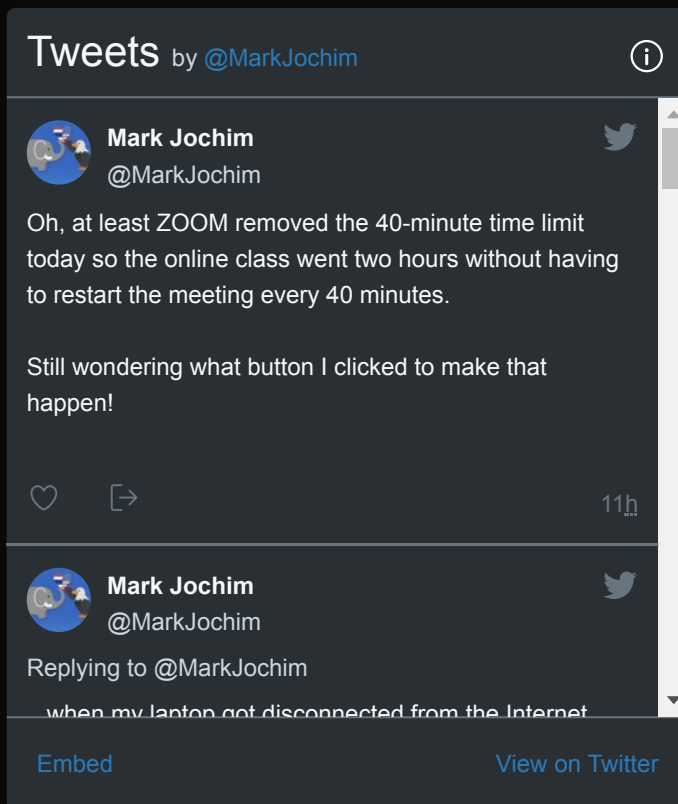
Agenda

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	Jun 1	2	3	4	5	6
	Belarus: Season Japan: Greetings Liechtenstein: Ed <a href="#">+7 more</a>	Hungary - Youth New Zealand: Sc Norfolk Island: N <a href="#">+2 more</a>	Finland: Internat Finland: Made In Finland: NORDEN <a href="#">+4 more</a>	Germany: Annab Germany: Europ Germany: Katha <a href="#">+3 more</a>	Botswana: Africa France: Vacation Hungary: Stamp <a href="#">+9 more</a>	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Malta: SEPAC - A Spain: Ministry c Spain: Robert Sc	Australia: Art of Australia: Lismor Bosnia and Herz <a href="#">+8 more</a>	Japan: Okinawa Kosovo: Europa Romania: Squirr <a href="#">+4 more</a>	Estonia: Butterfl Ireland: Ireland's Russia: Referend Spain - Spain	France: Flowers France; Frédéric Lithuania: EURO <a href="#">+4 more</a>	France: Montpell French Andorra: United State
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Belgium: EUROP Belgium: Places Belgium: The Ba <a href="#">+6 more</a>	Australia: Mid-Ce Czech Republic: Czech Republic: <a href="#">+7 more</a>	Bosnia and Herz Russia: Alexei N. Russia: Battle of Slovak Republic: <a href="#">+2 more</a>	Curacao : COVID Great Britain: Ro Malaysia: Iconic North Korea: Arc	Italy: Divella - It Japan: Traditiona Latvia: Bird of th <a href="#">+2 more</a>	Austria: Lipizzan Taiwan: Astronor
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Oman: COVID-1 Russia: Vladimir Spain: Discovere	Czech Republic: Hong Kong: Wor Hungary: Tokyo Vatican City: Eur	Macau: COVID-1 Tunisia: Tunisian Thailand: Ge	Austria: Modern Gibraltar: Definit Ireland: History <a href="#">+2 more</a>	Czech Republic: France; GR® 20 France: Olympe <a href="#">+4 more</a>	
28	29	30	Jul 1	2	3	4
Belarus: Towns	Austria: Church Bulgaria: EUROP Italy: EUROPA - Spain: Women I	South Korea: Ko Spain: Santande Spain: Spanish A Spanish Andorra	Belarus: Vegetab Japan: Sea Life United State	Germany: City of Germany: EU Co Germany: Schlei Germany: Writte	Austria: Traditior France : Saint Va France: Sainte O Macau: Chinese	

Events shown in time zone: Indochina Time - Bangkok



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Tweets von @"MarkJochim"





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