

The Rotary Congress Stamps of 1931

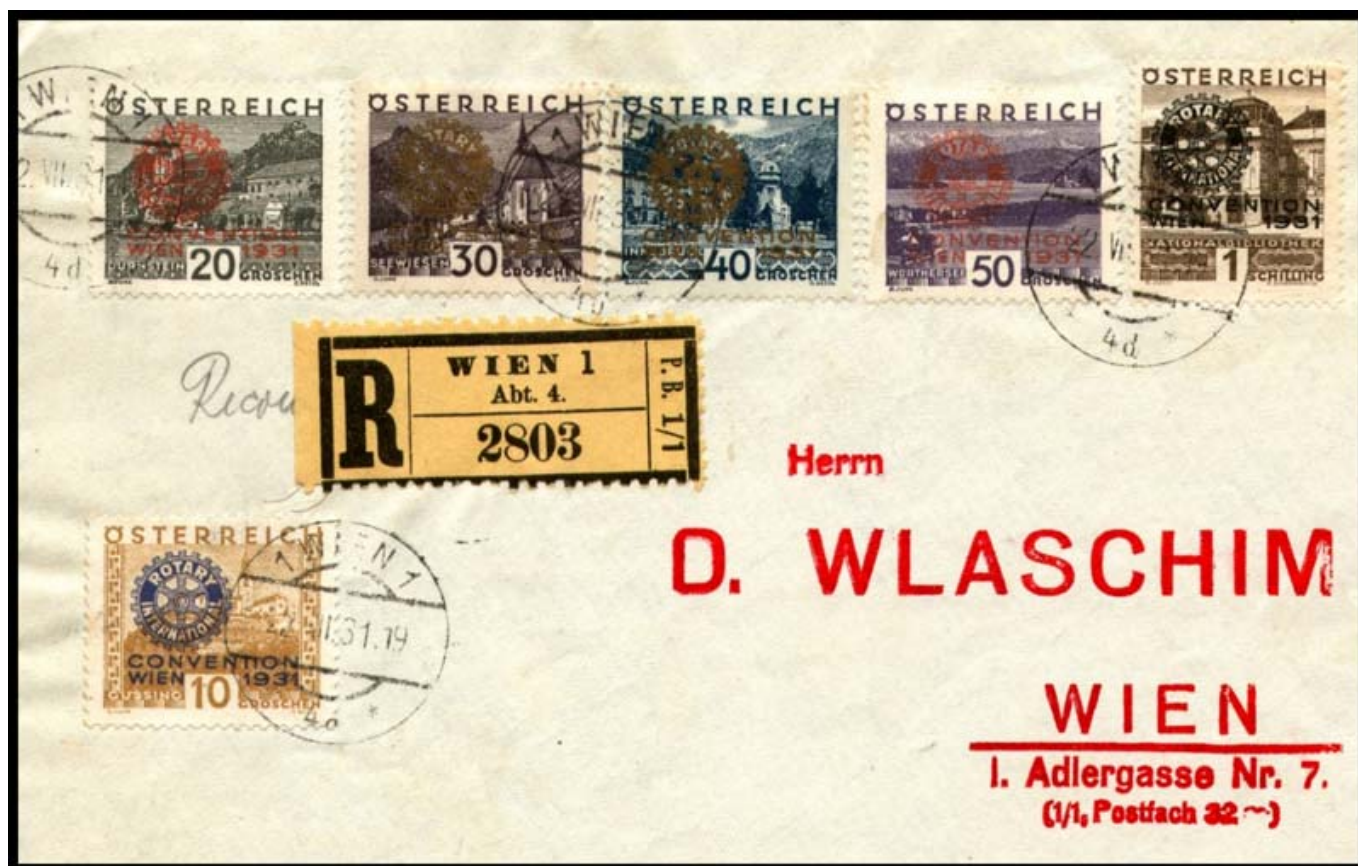
The International Rotary Organisation, which was founded in 1905, decided to hold its 22nd convention in Vienna during 1931 (23-26 June). To mark the occasion the Austrian Government overprinted, in various colours, some of the stamps from the 1929 Landscapes Series with the "Wheel of Rotary" emblem and with the words "CONVENTION/WIEN 1931". A set of six stamps (ANK518-523) was issued on 20th June 1931:



10g blue overprinted on bistre brown "Gussing"; 20g red over slate-black "Durnstein"; 30g gold over deep violet "Seewiesen church"; 40g gold on deep blue "Innsbruck"; 50g orange on bright violet "Worthersee"; 1s black on sepia "National Library". 50,000 copies of each were printed. The typographed groschen stamps were perf 12½ comb, the engraved schilling 12½ line. As usual, the stamps were sold only at selected Post Offices and only in complete sets at double face value for the benefit of this Rotary Congress. The stamps were valid until 30 September 1931.

A special cancellation was introduced for use from 22 to 26 June at the Convention. Based upon the Rotary badge, this appears to be the first special Austrian cancellation ever to be produced in connection with a specific set of stamps (which also show the same badge).

All values exist imperf, despite official denials; although a few are genuine, some imperfs are trimmed wide-margin perforated stamps. Stamps in "the wrong colours" also appear on the market. A wide variety of more-or-less contrived usages can be found.



Full set = 250gro; letter post = 20gro plus reg. fee of 30 gro = 50gro.



This cover was taken in July 1931 on a special flight by Graf Zeppelin and the ice-breaker ship Malekin to the North Pole and back. The equally-special franking of 6Sch 60gro is correct!