FOCUS - 1960.

ENFOQUE - 1960.

Mark Piper.

El 1960 fue un año transcendental en la historia de Cuba. Cuando la Revolución de 1959 tomó el poder, el nuevo gobierno inmediatamente llevó a cabo una serie de cambios que transformaron a Cuba permanentemente. Los cambios se evidencian en los sellos, sobres y moneda de 1960 y documentan la transición de la República aliada a los EE.UU. a la era de orientación Soviética que se aproximaba.

Sellos

Los sellos de Cuba de 1960 muestran un cambio radical de los sellos tradicionales de la era de la República impresos en intaglio a sellos con una gran variedad de estilos y formatos artísticos. En los últimos años de la República, los sellos de Cuba fueron emitidos en un programa conservador en la Compañía P. Fernández, S.A. en La Habana. El programa postal de 1960 consiste de 55 sellos y 2 hojitas de recuerdo con nuevas emisiones innovadoras y de gran colorido, y el uso de sobrecargas para cubrir las necesidades de producción de sellos.

El cambio de estilo artístico en los sellos no ocurrió únicamente en Cuba, sino a través del mundo a medida que aparecieron los sellos temáticos y los diseños libres, que durante los últimos 40 años han dominado el campo del coleccionismo filatélico. Este cambio creó una nueva área en la filatelia, entre las más populares hoy en día. La reducción de las tarifas internas de Cuba en 1959 fue una medida para promover el uso del correo y la alfabetización. El rol de los sellos en Cuba también cambió, cuando éstos se convirtieron en vehículos para promover temas políticos al igual que para generar ingresos con su venta en el extranjero. El 12 de octubre de 1960, las imprentas independientes de Cuba fueron nacionalizadas y puestas bajo el control de la Imprenta Nacional.

La primera emisión de sellos de 1960 fueron los conmemorativos del Aniversario de la Revolución (Scott 625-628 y C200-C202/Edifil 794-800). El 3 de abril de 1959, el Ministerio de Comunicaciones (MINCOM) anunció un concurso para el diseño de una serie conmemorativa del primer aniversario de la revolución. Los temas de los sellos fueron siete eventos de la lucha revolucionaria de 1956-1958 con premios para los ganadores de 500 pesos o becas de tres meses para estudiar arte en el extranjero.

No se escogió ningún diseño apropiado entre los participantes para el tema de "La Invasión". El diseño de este tema salió del propio MINCOM y fue usado en el sello de 12 centavos. El diseño del Desembarco del Granma, usado en el sello de 2 centavos, fue modificado a petición de Fidel Castro debido a inconsistencias en la representación de los hechos. Las caras de los participantes en varios de los dibujos fueron cambiadas por representaciones genéricas de acuerdo con la

1960 was a pivotal year in the history of Cuba. After the 1959 Revolution came to power, the new government quickly brought about a number of changes, which forever changed Cuba. The changes are evident in the stamps, covers and currency of 1960 and document the transition from the American-allied Republican era to the Soviet-oriented Socialist era that was to come.

Stamps

Cuba's stamps in 1960 show a major change from the traditional intaglio stamps of the Republican era to stamps with a wider choice of artistic styles and formats. In the last years of the Republican era, Cuba's stamps were issued in a conservative program printed by intaglio at the *Compañía P. Fernández, S.A.* printworks in Havana. The 1960 stamp program consists of 55 stamps and 2 souvenir sheets with innovative and colorful new issues, substantial use of overprinted stamps to meet postal demand and offset printing in stamp production.

The shift in artwork style for stamps was not unique to Cuba, but world wide as thematic stamps and free form designs in stamps were introduced, which have for the last 40 years dominated the stamp collecting field. This change created thematic stamp collecting as a new area of philately, which is one of the most popular collecting formats among collectors today. The reduction in domestic postal rates in Cuba in 1959 was meant to encourage the use of the posts and to encourage literacy. The role of stamps in Cuba also changed with stamps becoming vehicles to promote political causes as well as income generators with sales of colorful stamps abroad. On 12 October 1960, independent printworks in Cuba were nationalized and were placed under the control of the *Imprenta Nacional.*

The first stamp issue of 1960 was the *Anniversary of the Revolution* commemoratives, *Scott 625-628 & C200-C202/Edifil 794-800.* On 3 April 1959 the Ministry of Communications (MINCOM) announced a contest for artwork for a commemorative series to be issued for the first anniversary of the revolution. Seven events of the revolutionary struggle of 1956-1958 were the subject matter with prizes of 500 pesos or three-month art school scholarships for study abroad to be awarded to the winners.

No suitable design for the theme *La Invasion* was chosen among the entries. The artwork for this theme was produced by the MINCOM art department and used for the 12 centavos stamp. The *Desembarco del Granma* design used for the 2 centavos stamp was modified at the request of Fidel Castro due to inconsistencies in the depiction of the actual event. The faces of participants in various drawings were

política de no ilustrar personas vivas en los sellos de Cuba. El 9 de junio de 1959 se llevó a cabo una vista pública de los diseños escogidos y rechazados en el Parque Central de La Habana y el decreto autorizando su emisión se firmó en el MINCOM el 12 de junio de 1959.

Tras revisar varias ofertas, el MINCOM escogió a *Giesecke y Devrient* en Munich, Alemania para la impresión de los sellos utilizando una prensa multicolor Giori que producía sellos grabados en tres colores en un solo paso. Después de ver la pruebas en varios colores, se hizo la selección final y los sellos se imprimieron en Munich el 15 de septiembre de 1959, siendo emitidos oficialmente en La Habana el 28 de enero de 1960.

Las cantidades emitidas fueron desde 2 millones para el sello de 2 centavos destinado para la tarifa doméstica, la mayor, hasta 100,000 para el de 29 centavos pagando la tarifa aérea a España, la menor. Las líneas finas del grabado de las imágenes contrasta con el estilo llamativo de los dibujos y fue considerado algo innovador en el tratamiento del tema representado. La serie de 4 sellos del 15° Aniversario de la Revolución emitida en 1974 (Scott 1854-1857/Edifil 2097-2100) muestran los sellos del aniversario de 1960 en diseños de sellos sobre sellos.

Los sellos de 1960 impresos tradicionalmente en intaglio, emitidos en continuación de las emisiones de la era republicana, fueron el de la paloma de 12 centavos aéreo (Scott C205, Edifil 801) y el de 10 centavos de entrega especial (Scott E28, Edifil 824). El uso de los diseños de la República para varios sellos definitivos y de servicios especiales continuó hasta 1969 con las últimas reimpresiones de las series definitivas de 1954. La serie de 7 sellos del Fondo de Retiro de Comunicaciones emitida el 28 de marzo (Scott 637-640 & C206-208/Edifil 814-820) mostrando varios monumentos históricos, fue la última emisión de este tipo. La mitad de los ingresos de la venta de los sellos del Fondo de Retiro de Comunicaciones fueron destinados a las pensiones de los empleados del Ministerio de Comunicaciones. El Fondo de Retiro de Comunicaciones fue nacionalizado en 1960. (Fig. 1).

Los últimos sellos cubanos impresos con el logo de la Cía P. Fernández, S.A. fueron los de la serie de las Olimpíadas de Roma de 1960 con 4 sellos y una hojita recuerdo emitidos el 22 de septiembre (Scott 645-646 y C212-213a/Edifil 828-832). Los sellos muestran representaciones estilizadas en intaglio de vela en violeta, esgrima en naranja, boxeo en azul y carreras en carmín. La hojita recuerdo muestra los mismos diseños en azul gris. Cuarenta años más tarde, los diseños de estos sellos creados por Luis Martínez Pedro siguen siendo frescos y captivadores.

Los sellos de las Olimpíadas de Roma de 1960 tienen también una interesante historia. En la primavera de 1960 apareció en el mercado filatélico europeo una serie diferente de 5 sellos de Cuba de las Olimpíadas de Roma de 1960. A fines de mayo de 1960, el MINCOM recibió una proposición

modified to generic representations to comply with Cuba's policy of not depicting living persons on stamps. A public review of the chosen designs along with the rejected models was done 9 June 1959 in Havana's Central Park and the decree authorizing the issue was signed by MINCOM on 12 June 1959.

After reviewing several quotes, MINCOM chose *Giesecke and Devrient* in Munich, Germany to print the stamps using a Giori multicolor press that produced the three color engraved stamps in one printing pass. After reviewing proofs in various colors, final selections were made and the stamps were printed in Munich on 15 September 1959 and were officially issued in Havana on 28 January 1960.

Print quantities for the stamps went from a high of 2 million for the 2 centavos stamp destined for the domestic letter rate to 100,000 for the 29 centavos stamp paying the airmail rate to Spain. The fine line engraving of the images contrasts with the bold style of the drawings and was considered quite an innovative approach in the treatment of the subject matter. The 15th Anniversary of the Revolution set of four stamps issued in 1974, *Scott 1854-1857/Edifil 2097-2100*, show the 1960 anniversary stamps in stamp on stamp designs.

Traditional intaglio stamps in 1960 issued in continuation to Republican era issues were the 12 centavos dove air stamp, *Scott C205/Edifil 801*, and the 10 centavos special delivery stamp *Scott E28/Edifil 824*. Usage of Republican designs for various definitive and special service stamps continued until 1969 with the last reprints of the Republican definitive series of 1954. The Communications Retirement Fund set of 7 stamps issued on 28 March, *Scott 637-640 & C206-208/Edifil 814-820*, showing various historical monuments was the last issue of this type. Half of the proceeds from the sales of stamps issued for the Communications Retirement Fund were destined for the Ministry of Communications Employee's Retirement Fund. In 1960, the Communications Retirement fund was nationalized. (Figure 1).

The last Cuban stamps to be printed with the *Cía P. Fernández, S.A.* logo were the 1960 Rome Olympics set of four stamps and souvenir sheet issued on 22 September, *Scott 645-646 & C212-213a/Edifil 828-832*. The stamps show stylized intaglio representations of sailing in purple, marksmanship in orange, boxing in blue and running in carmine. The souvenir sheet shows the same designs printed in gray blue. Forty years later, the designs for these stamps created by Luis Martinez Pedro are still fresh and eye-catching.

The 1960 Rome Olympics stamps also have an interesting side story. In the spring of 1960 a different Cuban 1960 Rome Olympics set of five stamps appeared in the European stamp market. In late May 1960, MINCOM received a business proposal for the production and distribution in Cuba

Figure 1.
1960 stamps. A selection from various sets. Anniversary of the Revolution, Dove airmail, 1959 airmail Agrarian Reform semi-postal stamp overprinted for regular airmail service, Rome Olympics, Cienfuegos, and Christmas stamp of 1960. *Sellos de 1960. Selección de varias series. Aniversario de la Revolución, Paloma de correo aéreo, sello semipostal de la Reforma Agraria de 1959 sobrecargado para servicio aéreo, Olimpíadas de Roma, Cienfuegos y sello de Navidad de 1960.*



Figure 2.
Commercial airmail cover meter franked 31 May 1960 from Havana to Amsterdam, Holland. The cover bears an additional handstamp in violet, *PATRIA O MUERTE*, Motherland or Death. This slogan was first stated by Fidel Castro at the funerals of dockworkers killed at the explosion of the freighter *La Coubre* on 4 March 1960, and has since become a national expression of patriotism. *Cubierta aérea comercial con franqueo mecánico del 21 de mayo de 1960 de La Habana a Amsterdam. Tiene un cuño violeta PATRIA O MUERTE. Esta frase fue pronunciada por primera vez por Fidel Castro en los funerales de trabajadores del puerto fallecidos en la explosión del carguero 'La Coubre' el 4 de marzo de 1960, que dese entonces se convirtió en*



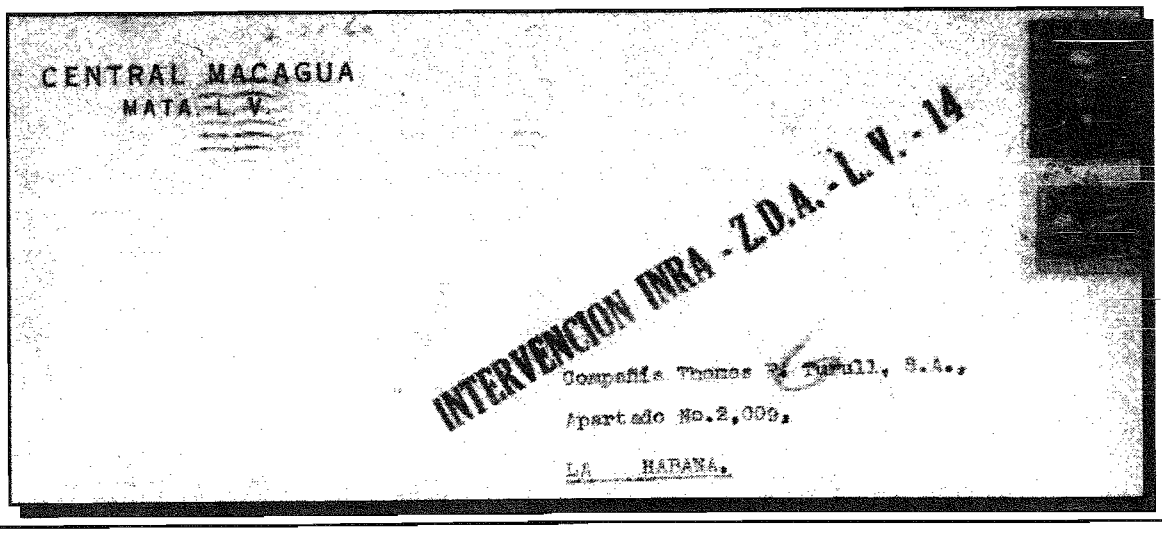


Figure 3.
Commercial domestic cover dated 11 February 1960 from the Macagua Sugar Mill at Mata, Las Villas province bearing an auxiliary marking in green across the face reading *Intervención INRA [Instituto Nacional Reforma Agraria] Z.D.A. [Zona de Desarrollo Agrícola] - L.V. -14*, i.e. INRA Intervention (*Nationalization*), Agricultural Development Zone - Las Villas - [Number] 14. The marking reflects the first of several nationalizations of Cuban sugar mills, which by the end of 1960 placed sugar production in Cuba under government control (Photo courtesy Jesús del Valle R.). *Cubierta doméstica comercial con fecha del 11 de febrero de 1960 del ingenio Macagua en Mata, Provincia de Las Villas, con la marca verde 'Intervención INRA [Instituto Nacional Reforma Agraria] Z.D.A. [Zona de Desarrollo Agrícola] - L.V. -14. La marca refleja la primera de varias nacionalizaciones de ingenios que puso la producción azucarera en manos del gobierno para finales de 1960.*

comercial para la producción y distribución en Cuba de dichos sellos y un paquete con muestras del impresor, *Materiale Filatelico LUX*, en Milán, Italia. El MINCOM respondió rápidamente con una carta diciendo que la posición del gobierno cubano es que tales sellos no estaban autorizados. La carta del MINCOM también exigía la entrega de todos los sellos restantes y las planchas de impresión a la Embajada de Cuba en Roma para su destrucción.

El gobierno cubano persiguió este asunto con una querella formal ante las cortes italianas. El número de agosto de 1961 de *Sammler Express*, una revista filatélica de Alemania Occidental, anunció la sentencia de 18 meses impuesta por las cortes italianas a Luciano Castagna, el impresor y dueño de *Materiale Filatelica LUX*. Es curioso notar que el problema de sellos no autorizados continúa hasta hoy con la circulación y venta de sellos alegadamente originados en las nuevas naciones de la antigua Unión Soviética y África. Los ejemplares de los sellos de las Olimpíadas de Roma de 1960 de *LUX* no son muy comunes pero aparecen de vez en cuando en subastas como fantasías cubanas.

El 1960 vió escasés de sellos, lo que llevó al MINCOM a sobrecargar sellos sobrantes almacenados. La escasés fue debida a la reducción de la tarifa interior decretada en la Ley 31 del 26 de enero de 1959 que dejó las estafetas postales con un corto número de sellos para la nueva tarifa. La primera serie de sobrecargas (Scott 624, 629-636 y C199, C203-204, Edifil 802-813) con valores de 1, 2 y 12 centavos, suplieron las tarifas postales más comunes - tarjeta, carta y correo certificado doméstico. Esta serie de 12 sellos sobrecargados fue emitida el 3 de febrero.

Los sellos sobrecargados fueron los valores obsoletos de 4 centavos de 1958 y 1959, los dos valores de los sellos semipostales de la Reforma Agraria de 1959, y los valores obsoletos de los sellos definitivos y de correo aéreo de 1931 y 1954. Las sobrecargas fueron impresas en rojo y muestran variedades en su alineación. Las cantidades sobrecargadas fueron bastante grande y es común encontrar estos sellos usados. Sin embargo, es difícil encontrar series completas de estos sellos nuevos al igual que el Sobre del Primer Día de *Lily*, que escasea.

El 16 de julio se emitieron otros 4 sellos definitivos sobrecargados usando nuevamente los valores sobrantes de las series definitivas de 1917 y 1954, con tres sellos de 2 centavos sobrecargados en azul, rojo o negro y uno de 10 centavos en negro (Scott 641-644/Edifil 825-827 y 833). El 18 de noviembre se emitieron dos sellos (Scott E29-30/Edifil 836/837) usando tambin los valores obsoletos de la serie de correo aéreo de 1931 sobrecargada con el nuevo valor de 10 centavos de entrega especial.

Dos sellos sobrecargados de la emisión de pájaros de 1956-1957 y de la hojita de recuerdo de 1940 del Centenario del Primer Sello (Scott C209-211/Edifil 821-823) fueron emitidos el 24 de abril en la exposición filatélica CUBEX '60 en La Habana para conmemorar el Día del Sello. Los sellos fueron

of the stamps and a sample packet of the stamps from the printer, *Materiale Filatelico LUX*, in Milan, Italy. MINCOM responded quickly with a letter stating the Cuban government's position of the stamps as unauthorized. The MINCOM letter also demanded all stock of the stamps and printing plates be turned over to the Cuban Embassy in Rome, Italy for destruction.

The Cuban government pursued the matter with a complaint with the Italian courts. The August 1961 issue of *Sammler Express*, a West German philatelic magazine, announced the 18-month sentence the Italian courts imposed on Luciano Castagna, the printer and owner of *Materiale Filatelica LUX*. It is curious to note that the problem of unauthorized stamps continues in the year 2002 with the circulation and sale of stamps purporting to originate from areas and new nations of the former Soviet Union and Africa. Examples of the *LUX* 1960 Cuban Olympic stamps are not common but appear every so often in stamp auctions as Cuban cinderellas.

1960 saw shortages of stamps, which caused the MINCOM to overprint a number of obsolete stamps in postal stocks. The shortages were caused by the reduction of domestic postal rates as decreed in Law 31 of 26 January 1959 which left postal drawers with inadequate supplies of the new domestic rate stamps. The first series of overprints, *Scott 624, 629-636 & C199, C203-204/Edifil 802-813*, with 1, 2, and 12 centavos values supplied the most common postal rates - domestic card, letter and certified mail rates. This series of 12 overprinted stamps was issued on 3 February.

The stamps overprinted were obsolete 4 centavos values of 1958 and 1959 issues, both values of 1959 Reforma Agraria semi-postals and obsolete values of the 1931 and 1954 definitive and airmail series. The overprints were offset in red and show variations in the alignment of the overprint. The quantity of stamps overprinted was quite large and it is not uncommon to find these stamps in used condition. However in mint condition these stamps are not so easy to locate as a complete set and the *Lily* First Day Cover for this set is quite scarce.

Four additional overprinted definitive stamps using obsolete values of the 1917 and 1954 definitive series were issued on 16 July with three 2 centavos stamps overprinted in blue, red or black and one 10 centavos stamp in black, *Scott 641-644/ Edifil 825-827 and 833*. On 18 November two stamps, *Scott E29-30/Edifil 836/837* were issued using obsolete values of the 1931 airmail definitive series overprinted with new 10 centavos special delivery fee values.

Two overprinted stamps from the 1956-1957 Birds issue and the 1940 Centenary of the First Stamp airmail souvenir sheet, *Scott C209-211/Edifil 821-823*, were issued 24 April at the CUBEX '60 stamp exposition in Havana to commemorate Stamp Day. The stamps were overprinted in

sobrecargados en azul, con un pequeño logo circular y el texto *EXPOSICION FILATELICA NACIONAL DIA DEL SELLO ABRIL 24, 1960.* La hojita recuerdo se había reemitido en 1948 y 1951 con nuevas conmemoraciones sobrecargadas pero la de 1960 parece haber sido impresa nuevamente para esta emisión. Los años *1860* y *1960* enmarcan el escudo nacional y cada sello en la hojita recuerdo está sobrecargada con el mismo logo circular que los sellos del Día del Sello. Se conoce un error de la hojita recuerdo (Edifil 823sh) con la sobrecarga desplazada.

Debe notarse que la mayoría de los errores de las sobrecargas de 1960 que han aparecido, como los invertidos y las parejas tete-beche se consideran falsos. Sin embargo, el famoso filatelista Dr. Buenaventura Cruz Planas en 1960 verificó la sobrecarga invertida del sello de 2c de la Reforma Agraria (Edifil 810hi) y la sobrecarga doble de 10 centavos sobre 20 centavos (Edifil 833hh) de ejemplares usados provenientes de una hoja vendida en Juan Gualberto Gómez, Matanzas.

El sello del Complejo Escolar Camilo Cienfuegos emitido el 27 de octubre fue el primero impreso por la recién creada Imprenta Nacional, que estaba encargada de administrar las imprentas nacionalizadas en Cuba. El sello de 2 centavos (Scott 647/Edifil 834) está impreso en un papel de seguridad bastante con una impresión "offset" multicolor. El sello del 30mo aniversario del servicio postal aéreo nacional fue emitido el 30 de octubre, diseñado por la misma persona, Cándido A. Parada. De aquí en adelante, el estilo libre de imágenes y arte de carteles fueron mucho más comunes en los diseños de los sellos cubanos. Estas dos emisiones introdujeron el nuevo estilo que caracterizó a los sellos cubanos por varias décadas.

Al introducirse la impresión de sellos por "offset", desaparecieron los tan familiares números de plancha en las hojas. Las emisiones siguientes muestran números de control de inventario estampados en tinta negra en el margen de la esquina superior derecha con una máquina manual de numeración. Estas esquinas con números se coleccionan en lugar de los bloques con números de plancha del pasado.

Cuba fue uno de los primeros países en emitir sellos de Navidad, comenzando en 1951. En 1960, Cuba sacó un nuevo formato para los sellos de Navidad. Se emitieron tres valores, 1, 2 y 10 centavos (Scott 648-662/ Edifil 838-852), en hojas de 25 con cuatro bloques principales con 5 sellos y una viñeta adicional en forma de cruz. Los sellos individuales muestran una de cinco flores: tabaco, café, guayacán, gengibre, o la flor de aguinaldo en forma de trompeta. Se conoce un error sin perforaciones horizontales (Edifil 843sh-847sh) en el sello de 2 centavos, que fue vendido en los correos de Santa Clara, Sagua la Grande y Sitiecito, en la provincia de Las Villas. Estas hojas de gran colorido tuvieron mucho éxito con los coleccionistas y usuarios, y aún hoy en día son muy codiciadas. Este patrón de sellos de Navidad en hojas de 25 sellos continuó por los próximos 10 años iilustrando la flora y fauna de Cuba. Tras finalizar en 1970-1971, este formato se resucitó una vez más en la popular emisión del Milenio, para el año 2000.

blue, with a small circular logo and the text *EXPOSICION FILATELICA NACIONAL DIA DEL SELLO ABRIL 24, 1960.* The souvenir sheet had been reissued in 1948 and 1951with new overprinted commemorations but the 1960 sheet appears to have been reprinted again for this issue. The years *1860* and *1960* now frame the national seal, and each stamp on the souvenir sheet is overprinted with the same circular logo as the overprinted Stamp Day stamps. An error for the souvenir sheet, *Edifil 823sh*, with a shifted overprint is known.

It should be noted that most errors for the 1960 overprints that have surfaced, such as inverts and tete-beche pairs are considered spurious. However, esteemed philatelist Dr. Buenaventura Cruz Planas in 1960 verified the inverted overprint for the 2c Agrarian Reform stamp, *Edifil 810hi*, and the doubled overprint on the 10 centavos over 20 centavos stamp, *Edifil 833hh*, from used examples from a sheet sold at Juan Gualberto Gomez, Matanzas.

The Camilo Cienfuegos School Complex stamp issued 27 October was the first printed in Cuba by the newly created *Imprenta Nacional*, which now administered the nationalized printworks in Cuba. The 2 centavos stamp, *Scott 647/Edifil 834*, is printed on a rather thick security paper using offset printing in multicolor. The 30th anniversary of national airmail service stamp was issued on 30 October was designed by the same designer, Candido A. Parada. From this point forward, free form collage images and poster art became much more the norm in Cuban stamp designs. These two issues introduce the new style of Cuban stamps for the next years and decades to come.

With the introduction of offset printing for stamps, the familiar printing plate numbers on stamp sheets disappear. Subsequent issues show inventory control numbers stamped in the upper right hand corner margin with a manual mechanical numerator machine in black ink. The control number corners are collected as the plate numbers of years past.

Cuba was one of the first countries to issue Christmas stamps, beginning this practice in 1951. In 1960, Cuba began a new format for Christmas stamps. Three values - 1, 2 and 10 centavos, *Scott 648-662/ Edifil 838-852*, were issued in sheets of 25 with four main blocks with five stamps and an additional vignette which shows as a overall cross pattern. The individual stamps show one of five flowers - tobacco, coffee, guayacan and ginger, or the trumpet-shaped aguinaldo flower. An error, *Edifil 843sh-847sh*, is known for the 2 centavos stamps, with missing horizontal perforations, which were sold at post offices at Santa Clara, Sagua la Grande and Sitiecito in Las Villas province. The colorful sheets were a success with collectors and postal users and today are highly sought. This pattern of Christmas stamps in sheets of 25 stamps would continue for the next 10 years, showcasing the flora and fauna of Cuba. Ending with the 1970-1971 season, the format was revived for a single Millennium pane for the year 2000 to wide acclaim.

Ministerio de Comunicaciones

En 1960, Enrique Sierra Oltuski, un antiguo líder del 26 de julio, fue Director del Ministerio de Comunicaciones. Durante su cargo hubo inicialmente muchos cambios en este Ministerio. Se continuaron las tarifas postales domésticas reducidas según el decreto del 26 de enero de 1959, al igual que las tarifas internacionales establecidas en 1958. El correo en Cuba estuvo sujeto a un impuesto postal de un centavo, que en 1960 continuó pagándose con un sello de tasa postal adicional. En 1960, el Ministerio de Comunicaciones de Cuba continuó usando el estilo americano de matasellar con cuños manuales y mecánicos de los años de la República. Se conocen matasellos mecánicos con los siguientes textos en 1960:

- 6 de febrero de 1960 - *EXPOSICION SOVIETICA*
- 14 de febrero de 1960 - *IX CAMPEONATO CENTROAMERICANO Y DEL CARIBE DE FUTBOL*
- 7 de abril de 1960 - *AÑO INTERNACIONAL DEL REFUGIADO*
- 18 de abril de 1960 - *III CONGRESO DE LA CONFEDERACION DE ORGANIZACIONES TURISTICAS DE AMERICA LATINA (COTAL) 12-23 ABRIL*
- 19 de mayo de 1960 - *25 ANIVESARIO TREN AEREO INTERNACIONAL*

Un estudio de las cubiertas de 1960 demuestra que el transporte del correo mantuvo la misma eficiencia que en los años de la República. El correo continuó siendo enviado a los EE.UU. por mar y por aire, y Miami siguió siendo el puerto de entrada para el correo norteamericano. El 3 de febrero de 1960, la línea aérea nacional, Compañía Cubana de Aviación, y el aeropuerto de La Habana en Rancho Boyeros fueron nacionalizados. Esto aparentemente no tuvo ningún efecto en el transporte del correo aéreo doméstico o internacional en 1960. La Compañía Lily de La Habana preparó la mayoría de los sobres del primer día para las emisiones de 1960. Sin embargo, en 1960 los gomígrafos con diseños alusivos al sello del primer día fueron reemplazados por matasellos de metal.

En 1959 se usaron en el correo cuños y etiquetas privadas con una series de mensajes patrióticos. La mayoría de ellos fueron particulares y reflejan el patriotismo de la época. Esto continuó en 1960 con diseños adicionales. John Hotchner, en *Linn's Stamp News*, ha descrito algunos de estos cuños en su columna y el coleccionista Jesús del Valle R. ha formado posiblemente la única colección conocida de estas marcas. Éstas fueron usadas en el correo doméstico e internacional y aparecen con mayor frecuencia en la correspondencia comercial. Se conocen cuños conmemorando la nacionalización de los ingenios y frases patrióticas junto con matasellos hechos en muchas oficinas postales que leen *AYUDE A SU CARTERO*, pidiendo contribuciones para el festival anual del Fondo para Empleados del Ministerio de comunicaciones. (Figuras 2 y 3).

Sellos Fiscales

Los sellos fiscales de la era Republicana continuaron circulando en 1960 y se conocen usados hasta 1967. En 1960,

Ministry of Communications

During 1960, Enrique Sierra Oltuski, a former 26 July leader, was Director of the Ministry of Communications. His tenure saw the many initial changes at Ministry of Communications. Domestic postal rates continued at the reduced rates decreed on 26 January 1959 and international rates established in 1958 remained in force. Mail in Cuba was subject to a one centavo postal tax, which in 1960 continued to be paid with an additional postal tax stamp. In 1960, the Cuban Ministry of Communications continued to use the American style postal hand and mechanized canceling equipment of the Republican years. In 1960, the following mechanized canceller slogans are known:

- 6 February 1960 - *EXPOSICION SOVIETICA*
- 14 February 1960 - *IX CAMPEONATO CENTROAMERICANO Y DEL CARIBE DE FUTBOL*
- 7 April 1960 - *AÑO INTERNACIONAL DEL REFUGIADO*
- 18 April 1960 - *III CONGRESO DE LA CONFEDERACION DE ORGANIZACIONES TURISTICAS DE AMERICA LATINA (COTAL) 12-23 ABRIL*
- 19 May 1960 - *25 ANIVESARIO TREN AEREO INTERNACIONAL*

An examination of covers from 1960 shows mail transport remained at the same efficiency as in Republican years. Mail continued to be sent to the United States using both air and sea services, and shows the continued use of Miami as the United States terminal for mail to bound to the US. On 3 February 1960, the national airline, *Compañía Cubana de Aviación*, and the Rancho Boyeros airfield serving Havana were nationalized. This nationalization does not appear to have had an effect on domestic or international mail transport in 1960. The Lily Company in Havana prepared most of the first day covers for issues in 1960. However, in 1960 the fancy pictorial rubber gum first day cancels came to be replaced with standard first day of issue metal cancellers.

In 1959 private handstamps and labels bearing a variety of patriotic slogans were stamped on mail. Most of these handstamps are of a private nature and reflect the fervent patriotism of the times. In 1960, this practice continues with additional types. John Hotchner in *Linn's Stamp News* has detailed some of these cancels in his column and collector Jesus del Valle R. has created probably the only known collection of these markings. These markings were used on domestic and international mail and are mostly noted on business correspondence. Handstamps marking the nationalization of sugar mills and patriotic quotations are known along with handstamps made by many post offices, *AYUDE A SU CARTERO*, (Support your Mailman), requesting support for the Ministry of Communications Employee Fund's annual festival. (Figures 2 and 3).

Revenue Stamps

In 1960, revenue stamps from the Republican era continued to be used with uses reported as late as 1967. In

se abolieron ciertas tarifas gubernmentales eliminando la necesidad de nuevos sellos fiscales. No se emitieron ni se sobrecargaron nuevos sellos fiscales a partir de 1958, pero los sellos existentes fueron utilizados hasta que se agotaron. Desde entonces, las tarifas se pagaban en efectivo y esto se anotaba en el documento. No fue hasta el 1 de enero de 1983 que se volvieron a emitir nuevos sellos fiscales. (Figura 4).

Enteros postales - aerogramas, sobres y tarjetas postales

En 1957 Cuba emitió su primer aerograma, A1, y en 1958 emitió el mismo aerograma con la lengueta engomada, A1c. Se conoce una reimpresión de este aerograma, A2a, en color azul más claro en lugar del azul negro usado en los aerogramas de 1957 y 1958, con el patron de seguridad impreso en azul en el fondo. Esta reimpresión no se anunció formalmente y no se conocen matasellos del primer día. La introducción de este aerograma en 1960 se ha confirmado con un ejemplar en la colección de Mark Tyx, matasellado en febrero de 1960. Se hicieron otras reimpresiones del aerograma de 10 centavos con el Cohete, que parecen haberse emitido hasta 1965.

Las diversas reimpresiones se pueden identificar por sus medidas en varios puntos, que muestran diferencias en su composición. Los puntos principales de identificación del aerograma A2a son la distancia entre el marco del texto y el borde del sello - 62 mm, y el color azul mucho más claro usado en los bordes de correo aéreo y los textos. Todos los aerogramas se imprimieron en un paso de dos colores en papel de 20 lbs. con un patrón de seguridad consistiendo de las palabras *CUBA AEREO* en relieve sin color. La Compañía P. Fernández, S.A. produjo los dos primeros aerogramas de 1957 y 1958, y también se cree que produjo las dos primeras reimpresiones. (Figura 5).

Para promover el Día de la Correspondencia Escolar, el 29 de marzo de 1960, el Ministerio de Educación de Cuba distribuyó en todas las escuelas de la nación un sobre especial prepagado. Los sobres, S15, que miden 160 x 92, se imprimieron en papel bond blanco de 24 lbs. en un solo paso en color azul. Tienen una indicia con un triángulo alrededor del texto *Franquicia Postal Escolar* con un matasello ondulado simulado con las palabras *Libre Franqueo*. En la izquierda tienen la figura de un niño con un globo echando una carta en un buzón con el texto *29 de Marzo, Día de la Correspondencia Escolar*. Se le animaba a los estudiantes a que le escribieran a sus parientes y amigos, usando los sobres especiales prepagados. No está claro si estos sobres fueron válidos solamente el 29 de marzo o también en otras fechas posteriores. Hoy en día estos sobres no son nada comunes. (Figura 6).

En 1960 hubo una escasez de enteros postales debido a la reducción de las tarifas postales domésticas el 26 de enero de 1959. En marzo de 1959, el inventario de tarjetas postales de 3 centavos de 1955 fue sobrecargado con un nuevo valor de un centavo para cubrir esta necesidad. El coleccionista Jesús del Valle R. reporta que en 1960 la oficina de correos de La Habana Vieja y otras oficinas postales vendieron tarjetas en blanco con franqueos mecánicos de *Pitney Bowes* como tarjetas prepagadas debido a la demanda existente.

1960, a number of governmental fees were abolished eliminating the need for new revenue stamps. New revenue stamps were not issued or overprinted after 1958 because of these changes, but available issues were used until exhausted. Once exhausted, fees were paid in cash with notations to the effect on the document issued. It is not until 1 January 1983 that new revenue stamps are once again issued. (Figure 4).

Postal stationery - aerogrammes, envelopes and postal cards

In 1957 Cuba issued its first aerogramme, A1, and in 1958 issued the same aerogramme with a gummed flap, A1c. A reprint of this aerogramme, A2a, is noted with a lighter royal blue color rather than the blue black used with the 1957 and 1958 aerogrammes, with the background security pattern printed with a blue tint. No formal announcement was made for this reprint and no first day cancellation is known. The 1960 date for introduction of this aerogramme was verified with an example from the collection of Mark Tyx, postmarked February 1960. Other reprints of the 10 centavos Rocket aerogramme were done, which are believed to have been printed as late as 1965.

The various reprints are identified by a series of measurement points, which show variations in composition layout. Major identification points for aerogramme A2a are the distance between the boxed aerogramme text and the edge of the stamp - 62 mm, and the much lighter blue color used for the airmail lozenges and texts. All the aerogrammes were printed in a two color pass onto 20 pound paper with a printed security background pattern consisting of the words *CUBA AEREO* in colorless relief. The *Compañía P. Fernández, S.A.* produced the first two aerogrammes of 1957 and 1958, and is thought to have produced the additional reprints as well. (Figure 5).

To promote School Correspondence Day, 29 March 1960, the Cuban Ministry of Education distributed a special prepaid envelope to schools nationwide. The 160 x 92 envelopes, S15, were printed on white bond 24 pound paper in a one color azure blue pass. The envelope bears indicia with a triangle enclosing the text *Franquicia Postal Escolar* (Scholastic Postal Franking) with a simulated wavy line canceller with the additional words *Libre Franqueo* (Free Frank). To the left of the envelope a cachet shows a boy with a balloon posting a letter in a mailbox with the text *29 de Marzo, Día de la Correspondencia Escolar*, (29th of March, School Correspondence Day). Students were encouraged to write their friends and families, posting their letters in the special prepaid envelopes. It is presently unclear if the envelopes were only valid on 29 March or for usage at later dates as well. Today examples of these envelopes are not common. (Figure 6).

In 1960, there was a shortage of stationery due to a reduction in domestic postal rates on 26 January 1959. In March of 1959, remaining stocks of the 1955 3 centavos postal card had been overprinted to one centavo to conform to this reduction. Collector Jesus del Valle R. reports that the Havana Vieja post office and other post offices sold blank postcards with *Pitney Bowes* meter frankings as franked postal cards in 1960 to meet demand.

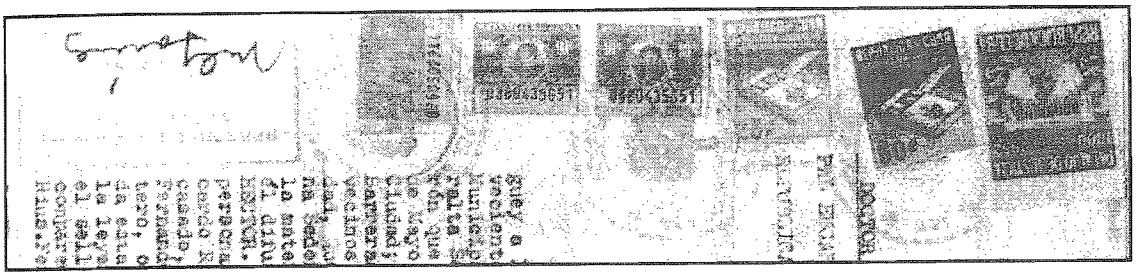


Figure 4.
Usage of Republican era revenue stamps on a birth certificate dated July 1961. *Uso de sellos fiscales en un certificado de nacimiento de julio de 1961.*

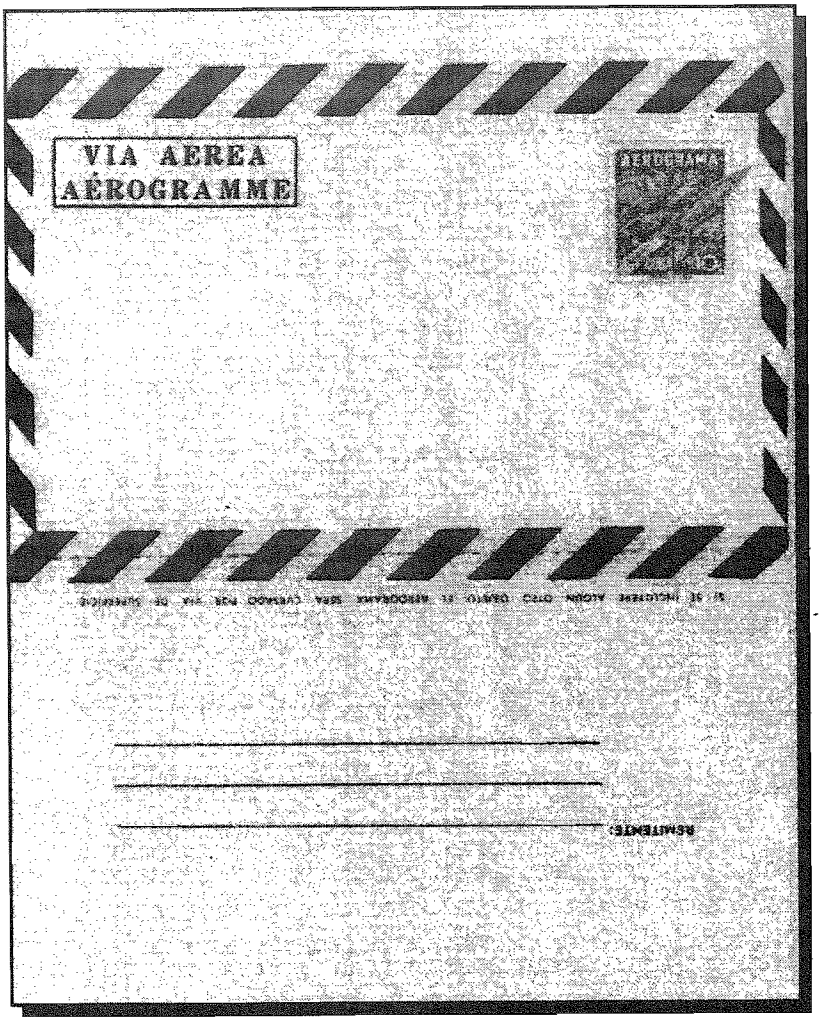


Figure 5.
1960 A2a 10 centavos Rocket aerogramme with blue tint. *El aerograma A2a de 10 centavos con el Cohete emitido en 1960 con un tinte azul.*



Figure 6.
1960 envelope S15, School Correspondence Day, posted 29 March 1960 at Maximo Gomez, Matanzas province, to Cardenas (courtesy of Jesus del Valle R.). *Sobre S15 de 1960 del Día de la Correspondencia Escolar, puesto en el correo el 29 de marzo de 1960 en Máximo Gómez, Provincia de Matanzas, a Cárdenas (cortesía de Jesús del Valle R.).*

Hasta el presente no tenemos información suficiente para documentar si esta emisión es una tarjeta postal provisional, ni tampoco se conocen ejemplares sin usar. El estudio de la fecha de los franqueos mecánicos y sus matasellos demuestra lo que se hubiera considerado como franqueos usados fuera de fecha. La emisión de sellos sobrecargados en 1960 le dan credibilidad a la posibilidad de que esta haya sido una tarjeta postal provisional. (Figura 7).

Dinero - Monedas

Tras la ocupación anericana de 1898-1902, la moneda cubana fue convertida al sistema decimal con el peso a la par con el dólar. De 1915 a 1960, la monedas cubanas se acuñaron en la ceca de los EE.UU. en Filadelfia, Pennsylvania.

En la era Republicana, las monedas de uno, dos y cinco centavos fueron acuñadas en cobre-níquel y las de denominaciones más altas de 10, 20, 40 centavos y 1 peso fueron hechas de plata .900. También circularon las monedas conmemorativas de uno, 25, 50 centavos y 1 peso, celebrando el centenario del nacimiento de José Martí en 1953, y las de 10, 20 y 40 centavos para el cincuentenario de la Independencia en 1952. La última moneda de la era Republicana fue un centavo conmemorativo modificado de José Martí emitido en 1958. Empezando en 1959, las monedas de plata fueron retiradas de circulación gradualmente y no se acuñaron monedas con fecha de *1959*. El decreto 3125 del 13 de abril de 1962 demonetizó todas las monedas de plata remanentes.

La primera moneda de la era Socialista fue la de cinco centavos de 1960 acuñada en cobre-níquel, siendo esta la última moneda cubana producida en la ceca de Filadelfia. Se acuñaron 20 millones de monedas, un número bastante alto. Sorprendentemente, esta monedas continúan circulando en Cuba hasta hoy. Las monedas de Cuba Socialista a partir de 1960 fueron acuñadas en Kremnica, Checoslovakia, y posteriormente en la ceca de GOZNAK en Leningrado, hasta 1996, cuando se estableció la Casa de la Moneda en La Habana. (Figura 8).

Dinero - Billetes

El papel moneda que circulaba en Cuba en 1960 vió la luz por primera vez en 1950 tras la creación del Banco Nacional de Cuba. El Banco Nacional de Cuba operaba como la casa del tesoro y el productor de los billetes en Cuba. En los años previos a 1959 los impresores de seguridad *American Bank Note Company* (ABNC) in Washington, DC, y *Thomas de la Rue,* (TDLR) en Londres habitualmente imprimían los billetes de Cuba. La denominación de los billetes cubanos emitidos por el Banco Nacional de Cuba de 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 y 1,000 pesos (catálogo *Pick* 77-85). También se emitió un billete de 10,000 pesos que rara vez circuló. En 1959, el peso cubano estaba a la par con el dólar americano.

En enero de 1959, Fidel Castro nombró a Felipe Pazos Presidente del Banco Nacional de Cuba. Pazos, un economista, se unió a los revolucionarios durante la campaña de 1956-1958. Pazos mandó a pedir más billetes a la ABNC a principios de 1959, utilizando el diseño previo. Como Presidente del Banco

Insufficient information is presently available to fully document this issue as a provisional postal card. So far mint examples have not surfaced. Examination of the meter franking date and postal cancels show what otherwise would be considered stale or past dated meter frankings. The issuance of overprinted stamps in 1960 give credence to the card being a provisional postal stationery card. (Figure 7).

Currency - Coinage

After the American occupation of 1898-1902, Cuba's currency converted to a decimal peso currency on the par with the American dollar. From 1915 to 1960, Cuban coinage was minted at the United States Mint at Philadelphia, PA.

In the Republican era, one centavo, two centavos and five centavos coins were minted in cupro-nickel and larger denomination 10, 20, 40 centavos, and 1 peso coins were minted in .900 silver. Commemorative one centavo, 25 centavos, 50 centavos and 1 peso coins commemorating the 1953 centenary of the birth of Jose Marti and 10, 20 and 40 centavos coins commemorating the 1952 50th anniversary of Independence also circulated. The last Republican era coin was a modified Jose Marti commemorative penny issued in 1958. Beginning in 1959, silver coinage was quietly withdrawn from circulation and no coinage with a *1959* date was minted. Decree 3125 of 13 April 1962 demonetized all remaining silver coinage.

The first coin of the Socialist era was the five centavos coin with a 1960 date minted in cupro-nickel and was the last Cuban coin produced at the US Mint in Philadelphia. 20 million coins were minted, which was a rather high mintage. Surprisingly, the coins circulate in Cuba to this day in the year 2002. Socialist Cuban coinage after 1960 was minted at Kremnica in Czechoslovakia and later at the GOZNAK mint in Leningrad until 1996 when the Casa de la Moneda was established in Havana. (Figure 8).

Currency - Banknotes

Cuba's paper currency in circulation in 1960 began circulating in 1950 with the creation of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba.* The *Banco Nacional de Cuba* operated as Cuba's treasury and issuer of circulating currency in Cuba. In the years up to 1959 the security printers *American Bank Note Company* (ABNC) in Washington, DC and *Thomas de la Rue,* (TDLR) in London had regularly produced Cuban currency. Cuban currency notes issued by the *Banco Nacional de Cuba* were denominated in 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 pesos values, *Pick* catalog 77-85. A rarely circulating 10,000 pesos banknote was also issued. In 1959, the Cuban peso was on the par with the American dollar.

In January 1959, Fidel Castro named Felipe Pazos as President of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba.* Pazos, an economist, had joined Fidel's revolutionaries during the 1956-1958 struggle. Pazos ordered additional banknotes from ABNC in early 1959, using the previous designs in circulation. As President of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, his signature appears on the lower left on the banknotes.

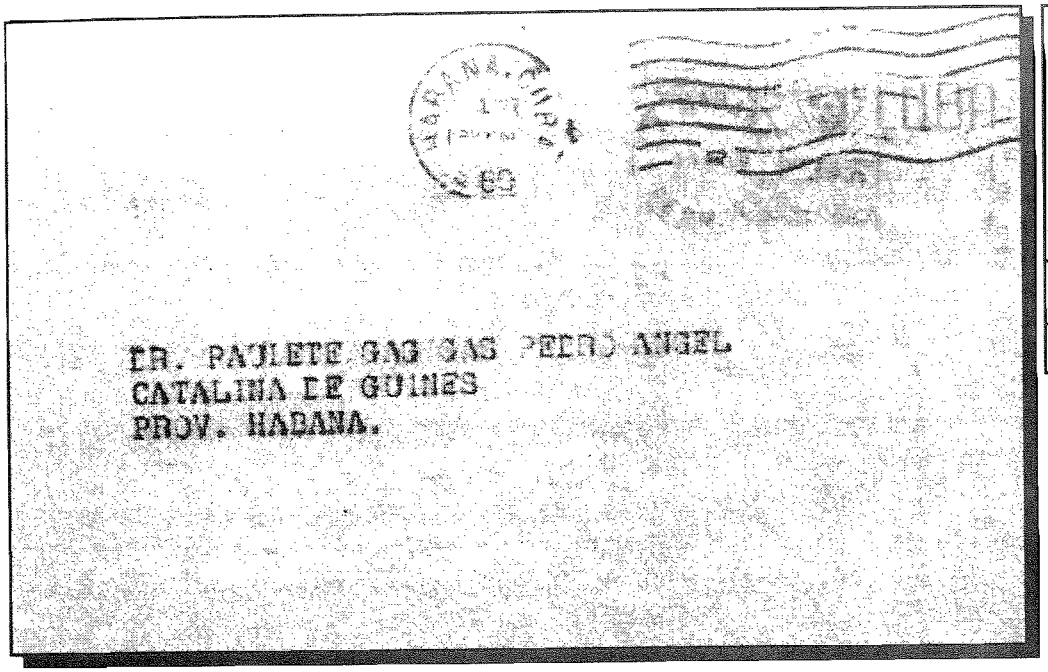


Figure 7.
1960 T33A Provisional postal card with *Pitney Bowes* model DL meter franking dated 1 July 1960 with a Havana mechanized cancel dated 27 July 1960. *Tarjeta postal provisional T33A de 1960 con el franqueo mecánico de Pitney Bowes, modelo DL, fechado el 1 de julio de 1960 y matasellado en La Habana el 27 de julio de 1960.*

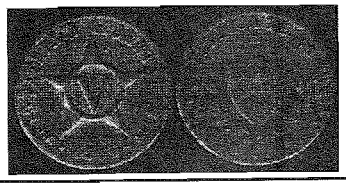


Figure 8.
1960 5 centavos coin - Yeoman 18 type 5b (courtesy of Jesus del Valle R.). *Moneda de 5 centavos de 1960, Yeoman 18 tipo 5b (cortesía de Jesús del Valle R.).*

Figure 9.
1960 Cuban ABNC 5 pesos note with Pazos signature - Pick 93. *Billete cubano de 5 pesos de 1960 hecho por la ABNC con la firma de Pazos - Pick 93.*





Figure 10.
1960 Cuban TDLR 5 peso note with Che signature - Pick 90c. *Billete cubano de 5 pesos de 1960 hecho por TDLR con la firma del Che - Pick 90c.*

Nacional de Cuba, su firma aparece en la parte inferior izquierda de los billetes.

Al poco tiempo Pazos tuvo problemas con Castro y fue removido del Banco Nacional de Cuba en octubre de 1959. El 25 de noviembre de 1959, el Che Guevara fue nombrado Presidente del Banco Nacional de Cuba por el Concejo de Ministros. Estos cambios se reflejaron en los billetes fechados en 1960. Los billetes de 1, 5 y 10 pesos de la *American Bank Note Company*, (*Pick* 77b, 93, y 88c) ya habían sido impresos con la firma de Pazos después de su partida.

Los siguientes billetes de 20, 50 y 100 pesos del ABNC (*Pick* 80c, 81c y 92b) fueron impresos con la firma del Che como Presidente. El billete de 100 nunca circuló y tan solo se conocen muestras. Los billetes con la firma del Che comenzaron a circular en junio de 1960. A principios de 1960, se ordenaron nuevos billetes de 5 y 10 pesos de *Thomas de la Rue* en Londres con la firma de Guevara (*Pick* 90c and 88c). Todos los billetes de 1949-1960 fueron demonetizados el 4 de agosto de 1961 y reemplazados con una nueva serie debilletes impresos en Checoslovakia. Ejemplares de los billetes de 1960 aparecen frecuentemente en subastas y son un tema interesante para coleccionar. (Figuras 9 y 10).

Ejército - Sobres de franquicia postal

A medida que el régimen Revolucionario dió a conocer sus objetivos socialistas, aumentó el descontento con la Revolución. Hubo incidentes de sabotaje, incendios y vuelos hostiles sobre la isla por contrarevolucionarios en muchas partes de Cuba durante 1960. El 26 de octubre de 1959, en un discurso a la nación, Fidel Castro pidió la creación de las Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias (MNR). Esta fue una llamada para crear una fuerza civil paramilitar y darle apoyo al ejército cubano en la eliminación de las actividades contra-revolucionarias. Los miembros de las MNR recibieron un entrenamiento básico de lucha de guerrillas y fueron enviados a las áreas rurales para erradicar las actividades contra-revolucionarias. La densa jungla de la sierra del Escambray en la provincia de Las Villas fue sede importante de esta actividad.

El coleccionista Jesús del Valle R. comparte este sobre de franquicia postal de 1960 enviado por una unidad del MNR en el Escambray. Es una cubierta oficial con papel timbrado del Ministerio de Comunicaciones. La cubierta tiene un cuño de las Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias en vez del porteo. El cuño muestra dos rifles cruzados, las letras MNR sobre el texto *Patria o Muerte*, bajo el diseño. El reverso del sobre tiene otras dos marcas. *Quién intente apoderarse de nuestra tierra solo recojerá el polvo de su suelo anegado en sangre .. Antonio Maceo.* Esta es una cita patriótica de Antonio Maceo, uno de los líderes de las Guerras de Independencia de Cuba de 1868-1878 y 1895-1898. La segunda marca, *De no encontrar al destinatario, devuelvase a MILICIA M COMUNICACIONES, Apartado 535.* es la dirección del remitente. Es curioso que el privilegio de franquicia postal del MNR se estableciera tan temprano. No se conoce ni se ha estudiado ninguna otra cubierta de este tipo. (Figuras 11, 12 y 13).

Pazos soon ran afoul of Castro and was ousted from the *Banco Nacional de Cuba* in October 1959. On 25 November 1959, Che Guevara was named President of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba* by the Council of Ministers. These changes were reflected in the banknotes with 1960 dates. The 1 peso, 5 pesos and 10 pesos from *American Bank Note Company, Pick* 77b, 93, and 88c, were already printed with Pazos' signature as President by the time Pazos had left.

The subsequent 20, 50 and 100 peso notes from ABNC, *Pick* 80c, 81c and 92b, were changed with the signature of Guevara as President. The 100 pesos note was never introduced into circulation and is only known from specimens. The banknotes with Guevara's signature began to circulate in June 1960. In early 1960, new 5 and 10 pesos notes were ordered from *Thomas de la Rue* in London and show Guevara's signature, *Pick* 90c and 88c. All 1949-1960 notes were demonetized on 4 August 1961 and replaced with a new series of banknotes printed in Czechoslovakia. Examples of the 1960 notes appear in auctions on a regular basis and are an interesting area to collect. (Figures 9 and 10).

Military - Free frank covers

As the Revolutionary regime made its Socialist objectives known, dissent against the Revolution grew. There were incidents of sabotage, arson, and hostile flyovers of the island by counter-revolutionaries in many locations in Cuba during 1960. During a nationwide speech, Fidel Castro called for the creation of the *Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias*, National Revolutionary Militias (MNR), on 26 October 1959. The call was to create a citizen paramilitary force to support the Cuban armed forces to root out counter-revolutionary activities. Members of the MNR were trained in basic guerrilla warfare and were sent to rural areas to eradicate counter revolutionary activities. One hotbed of such activity was the densely jungled Escambray mountains in Las Villas province.

Collector Jesús del Valle R. shares this 1960 free frank cover posted from a MNR unit in the Escambray. The cover is a Cuban government penalty envelope with the letterhead of the Ministry of Communications. The cover is franked with the seal of the *Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias* in lieu of postage. The seal shows two crossed rifles, the letters MNR above and the text *Patria o Muerte*, below the design. The back of the cover bears two additional markings. *Quién intente apoderarse de nuestra tierra solo recojera el polvo de su suelo anegado en sangre .. Antonio Maceo.* (Whoever seeks to take our lands will only receive the dust of his stand in blood) This marking is a patriotic quotation from Antonio Maceo, one of the leaders of the Cuban Wars of Independence of 1868-1878 and 1895-1898. The second marking, *De no encontrar al destinatario, devuelvase a MILICIA M COMUNICACIONES, Apartado 535.* (If addressee is not found, return to Militia M[inistry of] Communications, Postal Box 535) is a return to sender marking. It is curious to see the establishment of free frank privileges for the MNR at such an early date. No other cover of this type has been recorded or studied. (Figures 11, 12, and 13).



Figure 11.
1960 Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias free frank cover - front of cover with MNR handstamp in lieu of postage. Datestamped 14 March 1960, the cover was posted from a MNR unit in the Escambray mountains to Havana (courtesy of Jesus del Valle R.). *Cubierta con franquicia postal de las Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias en 1960. Frente del sobre con el cuño de las MNR en lugar del franqueo. Fue enviado el 14 de marzo de 1960 a La Habana por una unidad de las MNR en la sierra del Escambray (cortesía de Jesús del Valle R.).*

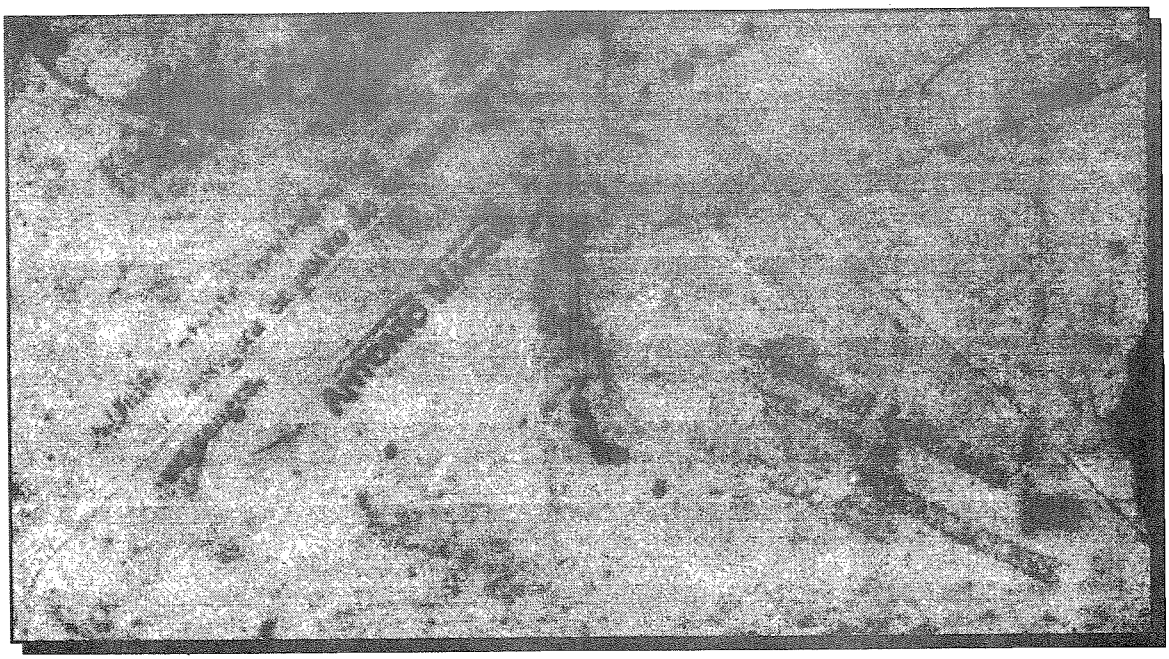


Figure 12.
Back of cover on Figure 11 with additional patriotic and misdelivery markings. *Reverso del sobre de la Figura 11 con marcas patrióticas y de redirección.*



Figurge 13.
Detail of MNR handstamp on the previous cover dated 14 March 1960 (enlarged 1.5 x). *Detalle de la marca de las MNR en la cubierta previa con fecha del 14 de marzo de 1960 (agrandado 1.5 veces).*

FUENTES / SOURCES

2000 Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue - Volume 2 C-F, Scott Publishing Company, Sidney, OH, USA 2000, p. 455.

Catálogo Especializado de Sellos de Cuba 1855 - 1996, EDIFIL S.A., Madrid, Spain, 1996.

Cronología - 25 años de Revolución, Editora Política, La Habana, Cuba, 1987.

Marcofilia, Filatelia Cubana, La Habana, Cuba, Año 3, no. 1, enero-marzo 1967, pp. 25-34.

Pick's Standard World Paper Money Catalog, 7th edition, 1994, pp. 385-387.

Primeros sellos de la Revolución Cubana, Filatelia Cubana, La Habana, Cuba, Año 17, no. 1, enero-abril 1982, pp. 10-12.

Aledón, José María. *La Moneda de Cuba*, Dobler Difusiones, 1999.

BANCO NACIONAL DE CUBA. *Cuba - Emisiones de monedas y billetes 1915-1980*, Museo Numismático, La Habana, Cuba, 1981, pp. 13,17.

Anderson, Jon Lee. *Che Guevara, A Revolutionary Life*, Grove Press, New York 1997.

Black, Edwards, Johnston, McMorris. *Cuba - A Country Study*, Foreign Areas Studies, The American University, 1976.

Guerra Aguiar, J.L. "La verdadera historia de la emisión postal conmemorando las Olimpíadas de Roma emitida por Cuba en el año 1960", *Filatelia Cubana*, La Habana, Cuba, Año 23, no. 2, enero-abril 1988, pp.18-23.

Hotchner, John M. "US Notes", *Linn's Stamp Magazine*, Sidney Oh USA, 23 November 1998, p. 6

Juárez Figueredo, Héctor. Correspondence with the author 1995-2002, Camagüey, Cuba.

Piper Mark and Portuondo Zúñiga, Santiago. *Catálogo Especializado de Enteros Postales de Cuba de la época Socialista - Edición 2000*, San Francisco, CA USA 2000, pp. 29, 82.

Portuondo Zúñiga, Santiago. Correspondence with the author 1992-2002, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba.

Quirk, Robert. *Fidel Castro*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1993.

Schön, Günter. *World Coin Catalogue - Twentieth Century*, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY USA 1983, pp. 380-382.

Tyx, Mark. Conversations and correspondence with the author, 1999-2002, Palo Alto, California, USA.

del Valle Rodriguez, Jesús. "Gomígrafos de Propaganda de los Primeros Años de la Revolución", *Filatelia Cubana*, Año 21, no. 3, 1986, pp. 19-21.

del Valle Rodriguez, Jesús. Correspondence with the author 2000-2002 - La Habana, Cuba.

FOCUS - 1960

By Mark Piper

1960 was a pivotal year in the history of Cuba. After the 1959 Revolution came to power, the new government quickly brought about a number of changes, which forever changed Cuba. The changes are evident in the stamps, covers and currency of 1960 and document the transition from the American-allied Republican era to the Soviet-oriented Socialist era that was to come.

Stamps

Cuba's stamps in 1960 show a major change from the traditional intaglio stamps of the Republican era to stamps with a wider choice of artistic styles and formats. In the last years of the Republican era, Cuba's stamps were issued in a conservative program printed by intaglio at the *Compañía P. Fernández, S.A.* printworks in Havana. The 1960 stamp program consists of 55 stamps and 2 souvenir sheets with innovative and colorful new issues, substantial use of overprinted stamps to meet postal demand and offset printing in stamp production.

The shift in artwork style for stamps was not unique to Cuba, but world wide as thematic stamps and free form designs in stamps were introduced, which have for the last 40 years dominated the stamp collecting field. This change created thematic stamp collecting as a new area of philately, which is one of the most popular collecting formats among collectors today. The reduction in domestic postal rates in Cuba in 1959 was meant to encourage the use of the posts and to encourage literacy. The role of stamps in Cuba also changed with stamps becoming vehicles to promote political causes as well as income generators with sales of colorful stamps abroad. On 12 October 1960, independent printworks in Cuba were nationalized and were placed under the control of the *Imprenta Nacional.*

The first stamp issue of 1960 was the *Anniversary of the Revolution* commemoratives, *Scott 625-628 & C200-C202/Edifil 794-800*. On 3 April 1959 the Ministry of Communications (MINCOM) announced a contest for artwork for a commemorative series to be issued for the first anniversary of the revolution. Seven events of the revolutionary struggle of 1956-1958 were the subject matter with prizes of 500 pesos or three-month art school scholarships for study abroad to be awarded to the winners.

No suitable design for the theme *La Invasion* was chosen among the entries. The artwork for this theme was produced by the MINCOM art department and used for the 12 centavos stamp. The *Desembarco del Granma* design used for the 2 centavos stamp was modified at the request of Fidel Castro due to inconsistencies in the depiction of the actual event. The faces of participants in various drawings were modified to generic representations to comply with Cuba's policy of not depicting living persons on stamps. A public review of the chosen designs along with the rejected models was done 9 June 1959 in Havana's Central Park and the decree authorizing the issue was signed by MINCOM on 12 June 1959.

After reviewing several quotes, MINCOM chose *Giesecke and Devrient* in Munich, Germany to print the stamps using a Giori multicolor press that produced the three color engraved stamps in one printing pass. After reviewing proofs in various colors, final selections were made and the stamps were printed in Munich on 15 September 1959 and were officially issued in Havana on 28 January 1960.

Print quantities for the stamps went from a high of 2 million for the 2 centavos stamp destined for the domestic letter rate to 100.000 for the 29 centavos stamp paying the airmail rate to Spain. The

fine line engraving of the images contrasts with the bold style of the drawings and was considered quite an innovative approach in the treatment of the subject matter. The 15th Anniversary of the Revolution set of four stamps issued in 1974, *Scott 1854-1857/Edifil 2097-2100*, show the 1960 anniversary stamps in stamp on stamp designs.

Traditional intaglio stamps in 1960 issued in continuation to Republican era issues were the 12 centavos dove air stamp, *Scott C205/Edifil 801*, and the 10 centavos special delivery stamp *Scott E28/Edifil 824*. Usage of Republican designs for various definitive and special service stamps continued until 1969 with the last reprints of the Republican definitive series of 1954. The Communications Retirement Fund set of 7 stamps issued on 28 March, *Scott 637-640 & C206-208/Edifil 814-820*, showing various historical monuments was the last issue of this type. Half of the proceeds from the sales of stamps issued for the Communications Retirement Fund were destined for the Ministry of Communications Employee's Retirement Fund. In 1960, the Communications Retirement fund was nationalized.



Image 1 – 1960 stamps – a selection from various sets. Anniversary of the Revolution stamp, Dove airmail stamp, 1959 airmail Agrarian Reform semi-postal stamp overprinted for regular airmail service, Rome Olympics stamp, Cienfuegos stamp, Christmas stamp of 1960

The last Cuban stamps to be printed with the *Cía P. Fernández, S.A.* logo were the 1960 Rome Olympics set of four stamps and souvenir sheet issued on 22 September, *Scott 645-646 & C212-213a/Edifil 828-832*. The stamps show stylized intaglio representations of sailing in purple, marksmanship in orange, boxing in blue and running in carmine. The souvenir sheet shows the same designs printed in gray blue. Forty years later, the designs for these stamps created by Luis Martínez Pedro are still fresh and eye-catching.

The 1960 Rome Olympics stamps also have an interesting side story. In the spring of 1960 a different Cuban 1960 Rome Olympics set of five stamps appeared in the European stamp market. In late May 1960, MINCOM received a business proposal for the production and distribution in Cuba of the stamps and a sample packet of the stamps from the printer, *Materiale Filatelico LUX*, in Milan, Italy. MINCOM responded quickly with a letter stating the Cuban government's position of the stamps as unauthorized. The MINCOM letter also demanded all stock of the stamps and printing plates be turned over to the Cuban Embassy in Rome, Italy for destruction.

The Cuban government pursued the matter with a complaint with the Italian courts. The August 1961 issue of *Sammler Express*, a West German philatelic magazine, announced the 18-month sentence the Italian courts imposed on Luciano Castagna, the printer and owner of *Materiale Filatelica LUX*. It is curious to note that the problem of unauthorized stamps continues in the year 2002 with the circulation and sale of stamps purporting to originate from areas and new nations of the former Soviet Union and Africa. Examples of the *LUX* 1960 Cuban Olympic stamps are not common but appear every so often in stamp auctions as Cuban cinderellas.

1960 saw shortages of stamps, which caused the MINCOM to overprint a number of obsolete stamps in postal stocks. The shortages were caused by the reduction of domestic postal rates as decreed in Law 31 of 26 January 1959 which left postal drawers with inadequate supplies of the new domestic rate stamps. The first series of overprints, *Scott 624, 629-636 & C199, C203-204/Edifil 802-813*, with 1, 2, and 12 centavos values supplied the most common postal rates – domestic card, letter and certified mail rates. This series of 12 overprinted stamps was issued on 3 February.

The stamps overprinted were obsolete 4 centavos values of 1958 and 1959 issues, both values of 1959 Reforma Agraria semi-postals and obsolete values of the 1931 and 1954 definitive and airmail series. The overprints were offset in red and show variations in the alignment of the overprint. The quantity of stamps overprinted was quite large and it is not uncommon to find these stamps in used condition. However in mint condition these stamps are not so easy to locate as a complete set and the *Lily* First Day Cover for this set is quite scarce.

Four additional overprinted definitive stamps using obsolete values of the 1917 and 1954 definitive series were issued on 16 July with three 2 centavos stamps overprinted in blue, red or black and one 10 centavos stamp in black, *Scott 641-644/ Edifil 825-827 and 833*. On 18 November two stamps, *Scott E29-30/Edifil 836/837* were issued using obsolete values of the 1931 airmail definitive series overprinted with new 10 centavos special delivery fee values.

Two overprinted stamps from the 1956-1957 Birds issue and the 1940 Centenary of the First Stamp airmail souvenir sheet, *Scott C209-211/Edifil 821-823*, were issued 24 April at the CUBEX ’60 stamp exposition in Havana to commemorate Stamp Day. The stamps were overprinted in blue, with a small circular logo and the text *EXPOSICION FILATELICA NACIONAL DIA DEL SELLO ABRIL 24, 1960*. The souvenir sheet had been reissued in 1948 and 1951with new overprinted commemorations but the 1960 sheet appears to have been reprinted again for this issue. The years *1860* and *1960* now frame the national seal, and each stamp on the souvenir sheet is overprinted with the same circular logo as the overprinted Stamp Day stamps. An error for the souvenir sheet, *Edifil 823sh*, with a shifted overprint is known.

It should be noted that most errors for the 1960 overprints that have surfaced, such as inverts and tete-beche pairs are considered spurious. However, esteemed philatelist Dr. Buenaventura Cruz Planas in 1960 verified the inverted overprint for the 2c Agrarian Reform stamp, *Edifil 810hi*, and the doubled overprint on the 10 centavos over 20 centavos stamp, *Edifil 833hh*, from used examples from a sheet sold at Juan Gualberto Gómez, Matanzas.

The Camilo Cienfuegos School Complex stamp issued 27 October was the first printed in Cuba by the newly created *Imprenta Nacional*, which now administered the nationalized printworks in Cuba. The 2 centavos stamp, *Scott 647/Edifil 834*, is printed on a rather thick security paper using offset printing in multicolor. The 30th anniversary of national airmail service stamp was issued on 30 October was designed by the same designer, Candido A. Parada. From this point

forward, free form collage images and poster art became much more the norm in Cuban stamp designs. These two issues introduce the new style of Cuban stamps for the next years and decades to come.

With the introduction of offset printing for stamps, the familiar printing plate numbers on stamp sheets disappear. Subsequent issues show inventory control numbers stamped in the upper right hand corner margin with a manual mechanical numerator machine in black ink. The control number corners are collected as the plate numbers of years past.

Cuba was one of the first countries to issue Christmas stamps, beginning this practice in 1951. In 1960, Cuba began a new format for Christmas stamps. Three values – 1, 2 and 10 centavos, *Scott 648-662/ Edifil 838-852*, were issued in sheets of 25 with four main blocks with five stamps and an additional vignette which shows as a overall cross pattern. The individual stamps show one of five flowers – tobacco, coffee, guayacan and ginger, or the trumpet-shaped aguinaldo flower. An error, *Edifil 843sh-847sh*, is known for the 2 centavos stamps, with missing horizontal perforations, which were sold at post offices at Santa Clara, Sagua la Grande and Sitiecito in Las Villas province. The colorful sheets were a success with collectors and postal users and today are highly sought. This pattern of Christmas stamps in sheets of 25 stamps would continue for the next 10 years, showcasing the flora and fauna of Cuba. Ending with the 1970-1971 season, the format was revived for a single Millennium pane for the year 2000 to wide acclaim.

Ministry of Communications

During 1960, Enrique *Sierra* Oltuski, a former 26 July leader, was Minister of the Ministry of Communications. His tenure saw the many initial changes at Ministry of Communications. Domestic postal rates continued at the reduced rates decreed on 26 January 1959 and international rates established in 1958 remained in force. Mail in Cuba was subject to a one centavo postal tax, which in 1960 continued to be paid with an additional postal tax stamp. In 1960, the Cuban Ministry of Communications continued to use the American style postal hand and mechanized canceling equipment of the Republican years. In 1960, the following mechanized canceller slogans are known:

- 6 February 1960 – *EXPOSICION SOVIETICA*
- 14 February 1960 – *IX CAMPEONATO CENTROAMERICANO Y DEL CARIBE DE FUTBOL*
- 7 April 1960 – *AÑO INTERNACIONAL DEL REFUGIADO*
- 18 April 1960 – *III CONGRESO DE LA CONFEDERACION DE ORGANIZACIONES TURISTICAS DE AMERICA LATINA (COTAL) 12-23 ABRIL*
- 19 May 1960 – *25 ANIVESARIO TREN AEREO INTERNACIONAL*

An examination of covers from 1960 shows mail transport remained at the same efficiency as in Republican years. Mail continued to be sent to the United States using both air and sea services, and shows the continued use of Miami as the United States terminal for mail to bound to the US. On 3 February 1960, the national airline, *Compañía Cubana de Aviación*, and the Rancho Boyeros airfield serving Havana were nationalized. This nationalization does not appear to have had an effect on domestic or international mail transport in 1960. The Lily Company in Havana prepared most of the first day covers for issues in 1960. However in 1960 the fancy pictorial rubber gum first day cancels came to be replaced with standard first day of issue metal cancellers.

In 1959 private handstamps and labels bearing a variety of patriotic slogans were stamped on mail. Most of these handstamps are of a private nature and reflect the fervent patriotism of the

times. In 1960, this practice continues with additional types. John Hotchner in *Linn's Stamp News* has detailed some of these cancels in his column and collector Jesús del Valle R. has created probably the only known collection of these markings. These markings were used on domestic and international mail and are mostly noted on business correspondence. Handstamps marking the nationalization of sugar mills and patriotic quotations are known along with handstamps made by many post offices, *AYUDE A SU CARTERO*, (Support your Mailman), requesting support for the Ministry of Communications Employee Fund's annual festival.



Image 2- Commercial airmail cover meter franked 31 May 1960 from Havana to Amsterdam, Holland. The cover bears an additional handstamp in violet, *PATRIA O MUERTE*, Motherland or Death. This slogan was first stated by Fidel Castro at the funerals of dockworkers killed at the explosion of the freighter *La Coubre* on 4 March 1960, and has since become a national expression of patriotism.

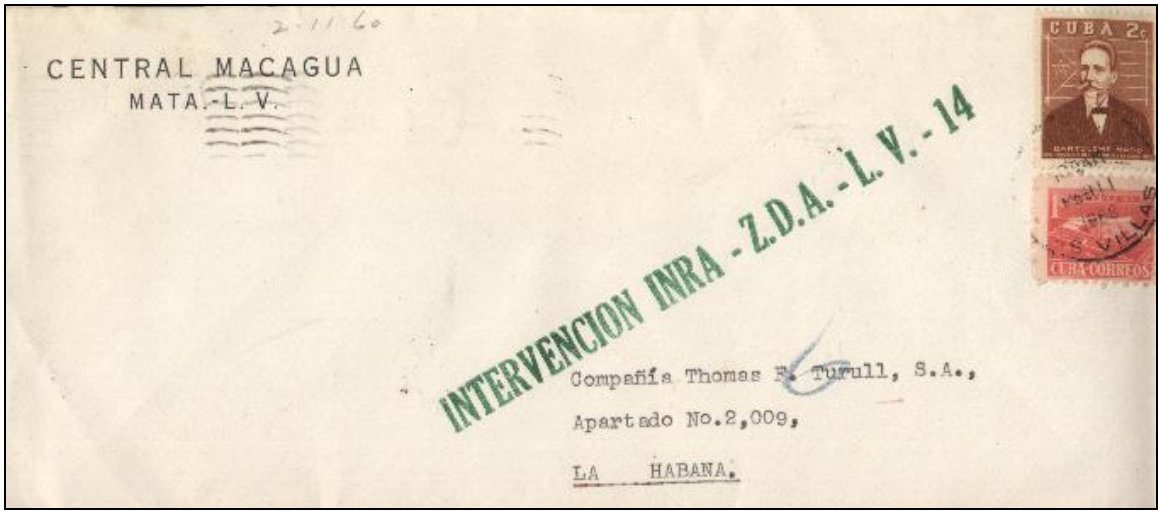


Image 3 – Commercial domestic cover dated 11 February 1960 from the Macagua Sugar Mill at Mata, Las Villas province bearing an auxiliary marking in green across the face reading *Intervención INRA [Instituto Nacional Reforma Agraria]*

***Z.D.A. [Zona de Desarrollo Agrícola] – L.V. –14*, i.e. INRA Intervention (*Nationalization*), Agricultural Development Zone – Las Villas - [Number] 14. The marking reflects the first of several nationalizations of Cuban sugar mills, which by the end of 1960 placed sugar production in Cuba under government control. Photo courtesy Jesús del Valle R.**

Revenue Stamps

In 1960, revenue stamps from the Republican era continued to be used with uses reported as late as 1967. In 1960, a number of governmental fees were abolished eliminating the need for new revenue stamps. New revenue stamps were not issued or overprinted after 1958 because of these changes, but available issues were used until exhausted. Once exhausted, fees were paid in cash with notations to the effect on the document issued. It is not until 1 January 1983 that new revenue stamps are once again issued.



Image 4 - Revenue stamp usage – usage of Republican era revenue stamps on a birth certificate dated July 1961.

Postal stationery – aerogrammes, envelopes and postal cards

In 1957 Cuba issued its first aerogramme, A1, and in 1958 issued the same aerogramme with a gummed flap, A1c. A reprint of this aerogramme, A2a, is noted with a lighter royal blue color rather than the blue black used with the 1957 and 1958 aerogrammes, with the background security pattern printed with a blue tint. No formal announcement was made for this reprint and no first day cancellation is known. The 1960 date for introduction of this aerogramme was verified with an example from the collection of Mark Tyx, postmarked February 1960. Other reprints of the 10 centavos Rocket aerogramme were done, which are believed to have been printed as late as 1965.

The various reprints are identified by a series of measurement points, which show variations in composition layout. Major identification points for aerogramme A2a are the distance between the boxed aerogramme text and the edge of the stamp - 62 mm, and the much lighter blue color used for the airmail lozenges and texts. All the aerogrammes were printed in a two color pass onto 20 pound paper with a printed security background pattern consisting of the words *CUBA AEREO* in colorless relief. The *Compañía P. Fernández, S.A.* produced the first two aerogrammes of 1957 and 1958, and is thought to have produced the additional reprints as well.



Image 5 – 1960 A2a 10 centavos Rocket aerogramme with blue tint

To promote School Correspondence Day, 29 March 1960, the Cuban Ministry of Education distributed a special prepaid envelope to schools nationwide. The 160 x 92 envelopes, S15, were printed on white bond 24 pound paper in a one color azure blue pass. The envelope bears indicia with a triangle enclosing the text *Franquicia Postal Escolar* (Scholastic Postal Franking) with a simulated wavy line canceller with the additional words *Libre Franqueo* (Free Frank). To the left of the envelope a cachet shows a boy with a balloon posting a letter in a mailbox with the text *29 de Marzo, Día de la Correspondencia Escolar*, (29th of March, School Correspondence Day). Students were encouraged to write their friends and families, posting their letters in the special prepaid envelopes. It is presently unclear if the envelopes were only valid on 29 March or for usage at later dates as well. Today examples of these envelopes are not common.



Image 6 – 1960 envelope S15, School Correspondence Day, posted 29 March 1960 at Máximo Gomez to Cardenas, Matanzas province. Photo courtesy Jesús del Valle R.

In 1960, there was a shortage of stationery due to a reduction in domestic postal rates on 26 January 1959. In March of 1959, remaining stocks of the 1955 3 centavos postal card had been overprinted to one centavo to conform to this reduction. Collector Jesús del Valle R. reports that the Havana Vieja post office and other post offices sold blank postcards with *Pitney Bowes* meter frankings as franked postal cards in 1960 to meet demand.

Insufficient information is presently available to fully document this issue as a provisional postal card. So far mint examples have not surfaced. Examination of the meter franking date and postal cancels show what otherwise would be considered stale or past dated meter frankings. The issuance of overprinted stamps in 1960 give credence to the card being a provisional postal stationery card.

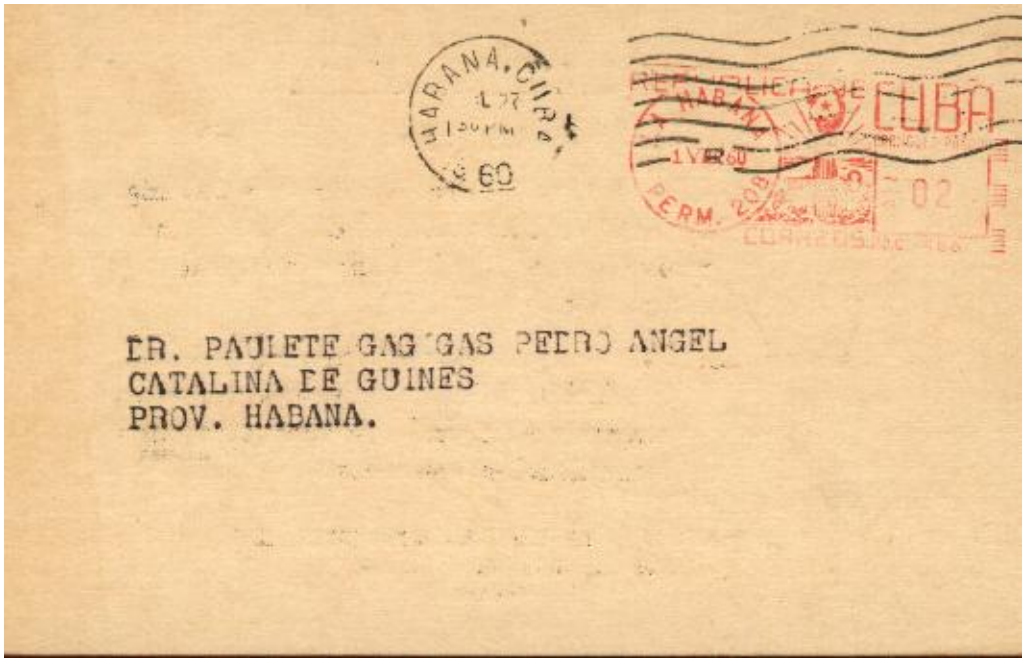


Image 7 – 1960 T33A Provisional postal card with *Pitney Bowes* model DL meter franking dated 1 July 1960 with a Havana mechanized cancel dated 27 July 1960.

Currency – Coinage

After the American occupation of 1898-1902, Cuba's currency converted to a decimal peso currency on the par with the American dollar. From 1915 to 1960, Cuban coinage was minted at the United States Mint at Philadelphia, PA.

In the Republican era, one centavo, two centavos and five centavos coins were minted in cupro-nickel and larger denomination 10, 20,40 centavos and 1 peso coins were minted in .900 silver. Commemorative one centavo, 25 centavos, 50 centavos and 1 peso coins commemorating the 1953 centenary of the birth of José Martí and 10, 20 and 40 centavos coins commemorating the 1952 50th anniversary of Independence also circulated. The last Republican era coin was a

modified José Martí commemorative penny issued in 1958. Beginning in 1959, silver coinage was quietly withdrawn from circulation and no coinage with a *1959* date was minted. Decree 3125 of 13 April 1962 demonetized all remaining silver coinage.

The first coin of the Socialist era was the five centavos coin with a 1960 date minted in cupro-nickel and was the last Cuban coin produced at the US Mint in Philadelphia. 20 million coins were minted, which was a rather high mintage. Surprisingly, the coins circulate in Cuba to this day in the year 2002. Socialist Cuban coinage after 1960 was minted at Kremnica in Czechoslovakia and later at the GOZNAK mint in Leningrad until 1996 when the Casa de la Moneda was established in Havana.



Image 8 – 1960 5 centavos coin – Yeoman 18 type 5b – Photo courtesy Jesús del Valle R.

Currency - Banknotes

Cuba's paper currency in circulation in 1960 began circulating in 1950 with the creation of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba*. The *Banco Nacional de Cuba* operated as Cuba's treasury and issuer of circulating currency in Cuba. In the years up to 1959 the security printers *American Bank Note Company*, ABNC, in Washington, DC and *Thomas de la Rue*, TDLR, in London had regularly produced Cuban currency. Cuban currency notes issued by the *Banco Nacional de Cuba* were denominated in 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, and 1.000 pesos values, *Pick* catalog 77-85. A rarely circulating 10.000 pesos banknote was also issued. In 1959, the Cuban peso was on the par with the American dollar.

In January 1959, Fidel Castro named Felipe Pazos as President of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba*. Pazos, an economist, had joined Fidel's revolutionaries during the 1956-1958 struggle. Pazos ordered additional banknotes from ABNC in early 1959, using the previous designs in circulation. As President of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, his signature appears on the lower left on the banknotes.

Pazos soon ran afoul of Castro and was ousted from the *Banco Nacional de Cuba* in October 1959. On 25 November 1959, Che Guevara was named President of the *Banco Nacional de Cuba* by the Council of Ministers. These changes were reflected in the banknotes with 1960 dates. The 1 peso, 5 pesos and 10 pesos from *American Bank Note Company*, *Pick* 77b, 93, and 88c, were already printed with Pazos' signature as President by the time Pazos had left.

The subsequent 20, 50 and 100 peso notes from ABNC, *Pick* 80c, 81c and 92b, were changed with the signature of Guevara as President. The 100 pesos note was never introduced into

circulation and is only known from specimens. The banknotes with Guevara's signature began to circulate in June 1960. In early 1960, new 5 and 10 pesos notes were ordered from *Thomas de la Rue* in London and show Guevara's signature, *Pick* 90c and 88c. All 1949-1960 notes were demonetized on 4 August 1961 and replaced with a new series of banknotes printed in Czechoslovakia. Examples of the 1960 notes appear in auctions on a regular basis and are an interesting area to collect.



Image 9 – 1960 Cuban ABNC 5 pesos note with Pazos signature – Pick 93



Image 10 – 1960 Cuban TDLR 5 peso note with Che signature – Pick 90c

Military – Free frank covers

As the Revolutionary regime made its Socialist objectives known, dissent against the Revolution grew. There were incidents of sabotage, arson and hostile flyovers of the island by counter-revolutionaries in many locations in Cuba during 1960. During a nationwide speech, Fidel Castro called for the creation of the *Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias*, National Revolutionary Militias, on 26 October 1959. The call was to create a citizen paramilitary force to support the Cuban armed forces to root out counter-revolutionary activities. Members of the MNR were trained in basic guerrilla warfare and were sent to rural areas to eradicate counter revolutionary activities. One hotbed of such activity was the densely jungled Escambray mountains in Las Villas province.

Collector Jesús del Valle R. shares this 1960 free frank cover posted from a MNR unit in the Escambray. The cover is a Cuban government penalty envelope with the letterhead of the Ministry of Communications. The cover is franked with the seal of the *Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias* in lieu of postage. The seal shows two crossed rifles, the letters M N R above and the text *Patria o Muerte, below* the design. The back of the cover bears two additional markings. *Quién intente apoderarse de nuestra tierra solo recojera el polvo de su suelo anegado en sangre .. Antonio Maceo.* (Whoever seeks to take our lands will only receive the dust of his stand in blood) This marking is a patriotic quotation from Antonio Maceo, one of the leaders of the Cuban war of independence of 1895-1898. The second marking, *De no encontrar al destinatario, devuelvase a MILICIA M COMUNICACIONES, Apartado 535.* (If addressee is not found, return to Militia M[inistry of] Communications, Postal Box 535) is a return to sender marking. It is curious to see the establishment of free frank priviledges for the MNR at such an early date. No other cover of this type has been recorded or studied.

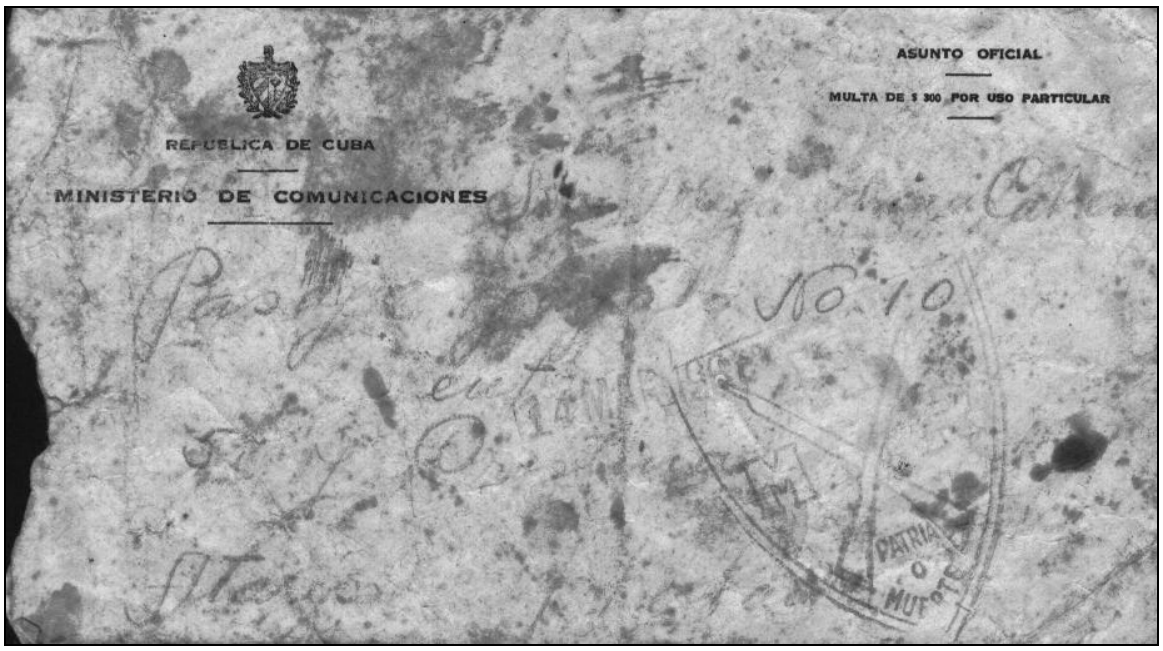


Image 11 - 1960 Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias free frank cover – front of cover with MNR handstamp in lieu of postage. Datestamped 14 March 1960, the cover was posted from a MNR unit in the Escambray mountains to Havana. – Photos courtesy Jesús del Valle R.



Image 11 - March 1960 Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias free frank cover – back of cover with additional patriotic and misdelivery markings.



Image 12 - March 1960 Milicias Nacionales Revolucionarias free frank cover – detail of handstamp with date 14 March 1960.

Sources – General
2000 Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue – Volume 2 C-F, Scott Publishing Company, Sidney, OH, USA 2000, p. 455
Catálogo Especializado de Sellos de Cuba 1855 - 1996, EDIFIL S.A., Madrid, Spain, 1996
Cronología – 25 años de Revolución, Editora Política, La Habana, Cuba, 1987
Marcofilia, Filatelia Cubana, La Habana, Cuba, Año 3, no. 1, enero-marzo 1967, p. 25-*34*
Pick's Standard World Paper Money Catalog, 7th edition, 1994, p. 385-387
Primeros sellos de la Revolución Cubana, Filatelia Cubana, La Habana, Cuba, Año 17, no. 1, enero-abril 1982, p. 10-12
ALEDON, José María: *La Moneda de Cuba*, Dobler Difusiones, 1999
BANCO NACIONAL DE CUBA: Cuba – *Emisiones de monedas y billetes 1915-1980*, Museo Numismático, La Habana, Cuba, 1981, p. 13,17
Anderson, Jon Lee: *Che Guevara, A Revolutionary Life*, Grove Press, New York 1997
Black, Edwards, Johnston, McMorris: *Cuba – A Country Study*, Foreign Areas Studies, The American University, 1976
Guerra Aguiar, J.L.: *La verdadera historia de la emisión postal conmemorando las Olimpíadas de Roma emitida por Cuba en el año 1960*, Filatelia Cuba, La Habana, Cuba, Año 23, no. 2, enero-abril 1988, p.18-23
Hotchner, John M.: *US Notes*, Linn's Stamp Magazine, Sidney Oh USA, 23 November 1998, p. 6
Juárez Figueredo, Héctor: correspondence with the author 1995-2002, Camagüey, Cuba
Piper Mark and Portuondo Zúñiga, Santiago: *Catálogo Especializado de Enteros Postales de Cuba de la época Socialista – Edición 2000*, San Francisco, CA USA 2000, p. 29, 82
Portuondo Zúñiga, Santiago: correspondence with the author 1992-2002, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba
Quirk, Robert: *Fidel Castro*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1993
Schön, Günter: *World Coin Catalogue - Twentieth Century*, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY USA 1983, p. 380-382.
TYX, Mark: conversations and correspondence with the author, 1999-2002, Palo Alto, California, USA
del Valle Rodriguez, Jesús: *Gomígrafos de Propaganda de los Primeros Años de la Revolución*, Filatelia Cubana, Año 21, no. 3, 1986, p. 19-21.
del Valle Rodriguez, Jesús: correspondence with the author 2000-2002 - La Habana, Cuba