

United Nations Origins 1938-1942

Roosevelt and Churchill Mold a New World Peace Organization

Exhibit Focus and Purpose

This six frame thematic style exhibit focuses on world events and the actions of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill which influenced the WWII Allied nations' plans to establish a new international peace organization to replace the failing League of Nations.

Exhibit Development and Scope

The exhibit progresses chronologically from the political rise of Adolf Hitler to major accords such as the *'Four Freedoms Speech'*, *'Declaration of St. James Palace'*, *'Atlantic Charter'* and *'Declaration by United Nations'*, in preparation for a new peace organization.



Leon Helguera - Designer

The exhibit ends with the transformation of the *'Inter-Allied Information Office'*, founded in 1940, into the *'United Nations Information Office'* in 1942. It was the earliest embodiment of what would formally become the United Nations organization founded in San Francisco, California in 1945, nearly three years later.

| Exhibit Plan (literature references) | (# of pages in chapter) | (time period) |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 0 Prelude (refs 1, 6) Key event: League of Nations fails to prevent Japan and Germany from resigning membership. (F1-P2) • Key item: League of Nations - Overprint rotated 180 degree error (F1-P1), 100 printed. • Key item: League of Nations service cover from Tokyo regional office (F1-P2), 1 recorded • Key item: League of Nations - Office of High Commissioner for German Refugees service mail (F1-P3), 3 recorded | (3 pages) | Leading into 1938 |
| 1 Political Climate Change (refs 1, 6) Key event: German <i>'Annexation'</i> of Austria and Sudetenland triggers concern in surrounding countries (F1-P6, P9) • Key item: French identity card for foreigners with Nansen Russian Refugee revenue stamps (F1-P10), <10 reported | (7 pages) | January 1938 - August 1939 |
| 2 Catalyst for Action (refs 1, 6) Key event: German <i>'Invasion'</i> of Poland and other European countries spur defensive actions (F1-P12, F2-P3, P4) • Key item: League service cover from temporary LoN Economic/Financial/Transit offices in USA (F2-P5), 4 recorded | (7 pages) | September 1939 - September 1940 |
| 3 A Plea and a Plan (refs 1, 2, 4, 6) Key event: <i>'Inter-Allied Information Center'</i> formed to coordinate war information among threatened countries (F2-P8) Key event: <i>'Four Freedoms'</i> speech given to the U.S. public and Congress (F3-P1) Key event: <i>'Lend-Lease'</i> program enacted to support the Allies in exchange for military base leases (F3-P2) • Key item: Block of four, Nations United for Victory issue signed by designer Leon Helguera (F2-P8), 2 reported • Key item: International Bureau of Education label on Federation for Simplified Spelling cover (F3-P1), 1 recorded | (9 pages) | May 1940 - June 1941 |
| 4 A New Hope (refs 1, 4, 6) Key event: <i>'Declaration of St. James Palace'</i> signed by 14 countries (F3-P4) • Key item: B.E.P. photo essays for 2c commemorative issue on official Bureau presentation page (F3-P5), 1 recorded | (8 pages) | June - August 1941 |
| 5 Two Journeys (refs 2, 3, 5) Key event: Churchill and Roosevelt plan a top secret meeting <i>'Somewhere at Sea'</i> (F3-P6) • Key item: B.E.P. photo essays for Roosevelt issue on official Bureau presentation page (F4-P4), 1 recorded | (9 pages) | 2 - 8 August 1941 |
| 6 The First Summit (refs 2, 3, 5) Key event: Churchill and Roosevelt formulate a <i>'Joint Statement'</i> outlining war and peace aims (F5-P5) • Key item: Certificate of mailing from U.N. Post Office using 1c U.N. 1951 definitive issue (F4-P12), 2 recorded | (9 pages) | 9 - 12 August 1941 |
| 7 Homeward Bound (refs 2, 3, 5) Key event: Announcement of the <i>'Atlantic Charter'</i> authored by United States and Great Britain (F5-P9) • Key item: U.S.S. Augusta cover mailed aboard ship the day the Atlantic Charter was announced (F5-P9), 1 recorded | (6 pages) | 12 - 16 August 1941 |
| 8 America Joins the War (refs 1, 6) Key event: Japanese <i>'Attack on Pearl Harbor'</i> pushes the U.S. into WWII (F6-P1) | (4 pages) | October - December 1941 |
| 9 A New Beginning (refs 4, 6) Key event: <i>'Declaration by United Nations'</i> signed by 26 nations (F6-P6) Key event: <i>'United Nations Information Office'</i> formed from the Inter-Allied Information Center (F6-P11) • Key item: Cover to Winston Churchill (c/o Roosevelt) at the Arcadia Conference in Washington (F6-P4), 4 recorded • Key item: Australian 1945 <i>'Peace'</i> issue on un-watermarked paper, not regularly issued (F6-P11) • Key item: United Nations Information Office <i>'In War and Peace - United Nations'</i> meter last day of use (F6-P12) | (9 pages) | December 1941 - November 1942 |

PLEASE NOTE : Expanded exhibit plan chapter summaries on the title page assist viewers in understanding the event context and sequence of each period. Headers include key events (in parenthesis and red text), vital actions in development of the United Nations. The synopsis and title page combination enhances jury overview.

Challenge

Mail related to many events and organizations is either not recorded or scarce and therefore a major acquisition challenge. The thematic approach allows some documentation through mail of the period, however official service mail of some organizations is only recorded out of period (ie. 1943) and is included as appropriate.

Condition and Rarity

Service mail is rarely pristine; creases, small tears or missing corners indicate actual transit. Rarity is determined from articles, monographs, census, exhibits, web sites and personal research. Items with interesting or unusual traits are described in bold italicized text. Key items (fewer than 10 reported / recorded) are matted in blue.

Personal Research

Thematic research of the time period, personalities and historical events includes little known information. Philatelic research with specialty collectors world-wide since 1975 contributed to determining material scarcity. Exhibitor contributes League of Nations and U.N. related research, articles and images to the UNPI 'Journal'.

Philatelic Knowledge and Elements

Descriptions of items demonstrate general philatelic knowledge (rates, rarity or appropriate information). The story-line is illustrated with diverse elements to demonstrate subject details and balanced presentation.

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Photo essay | Design proof | Trial color proof | Presentation proof | Engraving proof | Specimen |
| Block | Sheetlet | Coil/line pair | Se-tenant pair | Gutter pair | Souvenir sheet |
| Definitive issue | Commemorative | Semi-postal | Airmail | Revenue | Precancel |
| Gum variety | Self-adhesive | Watermark | Phosphor coating | Margin inscription | Plate number |
| Overprint | Propaganda forgery | Facsimile | Pane advertising tab | Booklet pane | Booklet cover |
| Printing variety | Paper variety | Perforation variety | Missing perforations | Compound perforation | Imperforate |
| Double impression | Text error | Missing color | Ship wireless receipt | Customs marking | Origin markings |
| Local rate | Domestic rate | International rate | Surface rate | Airmail rate | Printed matter rate |
| Free-frank | Postage paid | Return to sender | Rail packet receipt | Ship mail | Diplomatic mail |
| Registration | Special delivery | Return receipt | Certified | Passport fee | Identity document |
| Business reply | Pouch mail | Penalty mail | Official service mail | Inter-office mail | Propaganda mail |
| Occupation mail | Prisoner of war mail | Forwarded mail | Suspended service | Censor marking | Origin cachet marking |
| Commem cancel | Mute cancellation | Machine slogan | Illustrated meter | First day cover | Patriotic cachets |
| Certificate of mailing | Advice of receipt | Onward Air Transport | Suspended service | A.P.O. - F.P.O. mail | Commissioning |
| Postal stationery | Designer signature | Corner cards | Political label | Official souvenir cover | Postal announcement |

What is not here

Mail from Churchill's ship, H.M.S. Prince of Wales, is un-recorded (launched 19 Jan 1941, lost 10 Dec 1941).

Historical Notes

- The Allied nations referred to themselves loosely as the 'united nations' as early as 1941.
- Souvenir envelopes were printed by order of President Roosevelt for use by ship crews with commemorative cancellations applied after the fact. As family heirlooms, they're difficult to find (2 examples included).

Literature References

- 1 *The League of Nations 1929-1946*, George Gill, 1996, Avery Publishing Group, Garden City Park, New York
- 2 *Atlantic Meeting*, H.V. Morton, 1943, Dodd, Mead and Co., London, G.B.
- 3 *The First Summit*, Theodore A. Wilson - editor, 1991, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas
- 4 *Postal History of the United Nations*, Norris G. Robinson, 1985, UNOP, New York, N.Y. / Cologne, Germany
- 5 *The Journal* (of UNPI) articles: Vol. 20 #3, pages 4-7; Vol. 20 #5, page 3; Vol. 29 #2, pages 16-18.
- 6 *World War II*, Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II (08/17)