The World Community Honored Sikorsky Aircraft With Commemorative Postage Stamps And Postcards

Igor Sikorsky was awarded Universal Philatelic Recognition from over 30 countries that issued more than 65 postal stamps and numerous post cards. This recognition covered the three careers of Igor Sikorsky starting in Russia with his early pioneer airplanes, and continuing with his aviation accomplishments in the United States.
Dear Members,

It is with great pleasure that I again have the opportunity to wish all our members a Very Happy and Healthy 2011! As I enter my seventh year as president of the Archives, I again proudly look back to the continuing progress we have made and the increased public awareness of our organization while spreading the Legacy of Igor Sikorsky. This is done through our Quarterly Newsletter, which is distributed not only to our members but also through Sikorsky Aircraft and community organizations. In addition to our Newsletter, requests for presentations on the Life and Legacy of Igor Sikorsky continue at an annual average of 10 a year. Over the last 36 months we have given 32 presentations.

The past year has been very rewarding as the Archives participated in three major events: the three-day Memorial Day Air Show held at the Sikorsky Memorial Airport, the 2010 Sikorsky Aircraft Family Day event in October, and the October Russian Heritage Month events proclaimed by the mayor of Stratford. The latter event saluted those talented Russian-born individuals who significantly impacted the industrial growth of Stratford, Connecticut, and most notably, Igor I. Sikorsky. Below are a few pictures of the Archives participation in those events.

Of course all this progress and activities cannot happen without the dedicated support of our small volunteer group. So again, I stress that without the volunteers we could not perform our day-to-day mission. Most of us are “senior citizens,” so it is obvious we need to attract the younger aviation enthusiasts to carry this mission into the future. Visit us at the Archives to understand the dedication of the few and the work we do to “Preserve the Sikorsky Legacy.”

Sincerely,
Dan Libertino, President
Universal Philatelic Recognition of Igor Sikorsky started with the first release of an honorary stamp by Liberia in 1938, and the Canal Zone in 1939. The United States and Sierra Leone issued commemorating stamps and post cards honoring Igor Sikorsky and his accomplishments in 1987 and 1988. Historical data available lists the following countries which have honored the genius of Igor Sikorsky and accomplishments of the Sikorsky Aircraft Company up to the 1988 time period. The names of the countries issuing the honorary stamps are as of the date of stamp issue. Historic and political events have since changed a number of the country names.

- Antigua
- Bahamas
- Barbuda
- Bermuda
- Cameroun
- Canal Zone
- Chile
- Comoro Island
- Congo Republic
- Cuba
- Djibouti
- French Equatorial Africa
- French Guiana
- Gabon
- Hong Kong
- Ivory Coast
- Jamaica
- Liberia
- Monaco
- Netherlands Antilles
- Nevis
- Panama Canal Zone
- Oceana
- Rwanda
- St. Kitts
- St. Lucia
- Samoa
- Surinam
- Turks Calcos
- United States
- Zaire

The Sikorsky Aircraft airplanes, sea planes and helicopters honored by the Universal Philatelic Recognition covered the models: S-21, S-38, S-40, S-42, S-43, VS-300 (S-46), S-51, S-59, S-61, S-62, S-64, S-65, S-67, S-70, and S-76. Igor Sikorsky was honored with portraits on three stamps. Republique Gabonaise (December, 1970), Turks & Caicos, (1979), and the United States (June, 1988).
The earliest Sikorsky aircraft honored with a stamp was the S-21 Russian Knight, the first four engine aircraft in the world. St. Kitts issued the stamp in 1983 to commemorate 200 years of manned flight.

Historical data identifies the first free flight with human passengers was on November 21, 1783 with the scientist Jean-Francois Pilatre de Rozier, the hot air balloon manufacturers, Jean-Baptiste Reveillon and Giroud de Villette, at the Folie Titon in Paris, France. An illustration of this historic occasion is shown below on the left during the initial lift-off.

A few days later, on December 1, 1783, professor Jacques Charles with Nicolas and Louis Robert took off with the first manned hydrogen balloon at the Place de la Concorde to the Tuileries Palace, shown in the right illustration.

The St. Kitts Stamp historically pays tribute to all of the Sikorsky family of four engine aircraft.

The S-22 was the largest four engine sea plane in the world. The S-24 was the first of a new series of four engine aircraft. The S-25 was named the Ilya Muromets in honor of a Russian naval hero. It was the first aircraft with two tail gunner stations. The S-27 Yeh was the largest and heaviest airplane. It had a cruising speed of 80 miles per hour.
Igor Sikorsky’s sea planes, which included flying boats and amphibians were a major factor in encouraging over ocean travel via air routes to the Caribbean Islands, Bermuda, West Indies, Central and South America, across Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and regions which would be unreachable by other means. In addition to his contributions in the aviation field, he is remembered for bringing people of all races and creeds closer together to achieve understanding leading to a better world. The stamps and postcards shown are just a small sample of the honors bestowed on Igor Sikorsky.
A 36 cent airmail stamp honoring Igor Sikorsky was issued on June 23, 1988 in Stratford, Connecticut. The dedication ceremony was held at the Sikorsky Aircraft facility. The first day of issue of the stamp was historically commemorated on postal envelopes and post cards addressed around the world. The Sikorsky aviation history was portrayed on the postal media covering Igor Sikorsky’s aviation careers from the Russian era through the American years of airplanes and helicopters.

Within a span of two decades the Sikorsky helicopter progressed from first flight to recovery of space capsules.

Project Mercury Astronaut Virgil Grissom returns from space, and is recovered with a Marine HUS-1 helicopter, July 21, 1961.
Igor Sikorsky becomes a man of letters
Join the Sikorsky Archives

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The thing that is remarkable about Igor Sikorsky, is the great precision in his thought and speech, combined with an extraordinary soaring beyond facts. He can soar out with the mystics and come right back to the practical, to daily life and people. He never excludes people. Sometimes the religious-minded exclude people or force their beliefs on others. Igor never does.”

Anne Lindbergh (spouse of Charles Lindbergh)