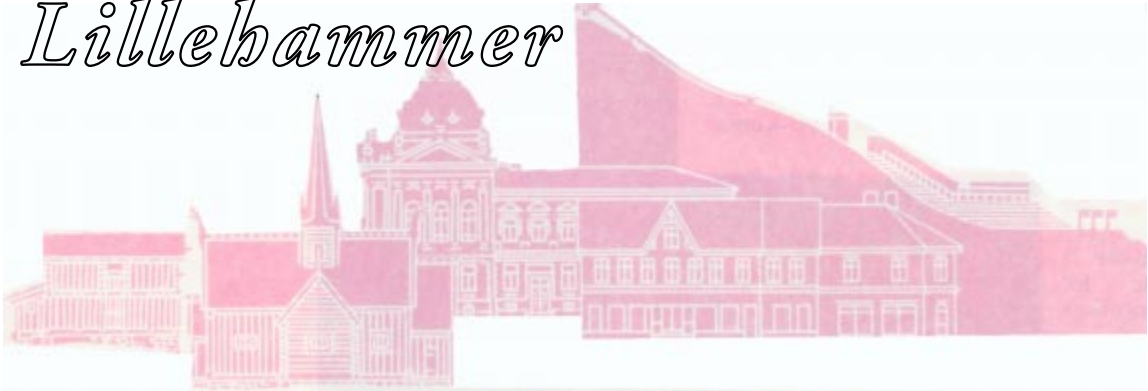


Stamps in Lillehammer



In Norway the Games were a great family affair. The royal family attended events every day, along with practically the whole country, which was quite simply fanatical about the Games. By their presence, they expressed their national pride and joy. And the Norwegian post office did not want to be left out. As we have mentioned already in the *Review*, it set up an extremely successful philately programme. Five stamps representing the Norwegian Olympic medallists in Albertville were on sale over the last two years, and only the fifth was still available when the Games started. A special post office was set up in Lillehammer for philatelists, historians and memorabilia collectors. For the former, this provided an opportunity to add to their stamp collections: there were Lillehammer's ten stamps on Olympic themes, in individual pockets and in entires, and postcards illustrated with one of the six Olympic winter disciplines, bearing a stamp from the



series cancelled on the first day of the Games. For historians and enthusiasts, the real gems were to be found in the basement, where several collections were on show, including rarities like the first stamp cancelled in Lillehammer on 1st January 1855.

The Olympic Museum sent some of its treasures from Lausanne, and several other prestigious collections were on display, including that of the late Norwegian minister for foreign affairs. The sudden death of Johan J. Holst on 13th January transformed this presentation, entirely devoted to Winter Games issues, into a final tribute by the sports world to this man of peace. Another fascinating item was the collection of Mr Manfred Bergman, "*Olympic philately from 1896 to the present day*", with particular emphasis on the issues planned for the 1916 and 1940 Games, which never took place.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

The first stage in the life of a stamp is the series of sketches, the inspirational motifs and the designer's research, which is always fascinating to see. Here, it was the work of Bruno Oldani and Knut Loekke-Soerensen (photos, opposite). The former, originally from Switzerland, is a professor at the Oslo School of Fine Arts; he has created ten Olympic stamps which



have won him several awards. Loekke-Soerensen is an engraver and lithographer; he regularly works with the designers of Norwegian bank notes, and was responsible for the five portraits of the Norwegian champions in Albertville. Colours, flags, buildings of Lillehammer, the movements of sport; every element under consideration is worked out here in its smallest detail, with the final product in view - the stamp.

For sports lovers, who are generally collectors of Olympic stamps, the Norwegian post office added photo souvenirs of the 1952 Games, the Holmenkollen ski jump, and the torch relay from Morgedal to its second kindling for the Games in Lillehammer. The post office also had the excellent idea of linking with this exhibition some of the champions who have written the finest pages of Norwegian Olympic history. Each day, between the end of the day's competitions and the medals ceremony, a young and not-so-young audience, all fanatics, met fourteen former gold medallists, who spoke of their achievements and signed souvenir postcards. The crowds were proof that the meetings were a success. For souvenir lovers, the Norwe-

gian post office, in addition to the book of Olympic stamps, also instituted an original mailing service, detailing the cancellations in progress during the Games.

