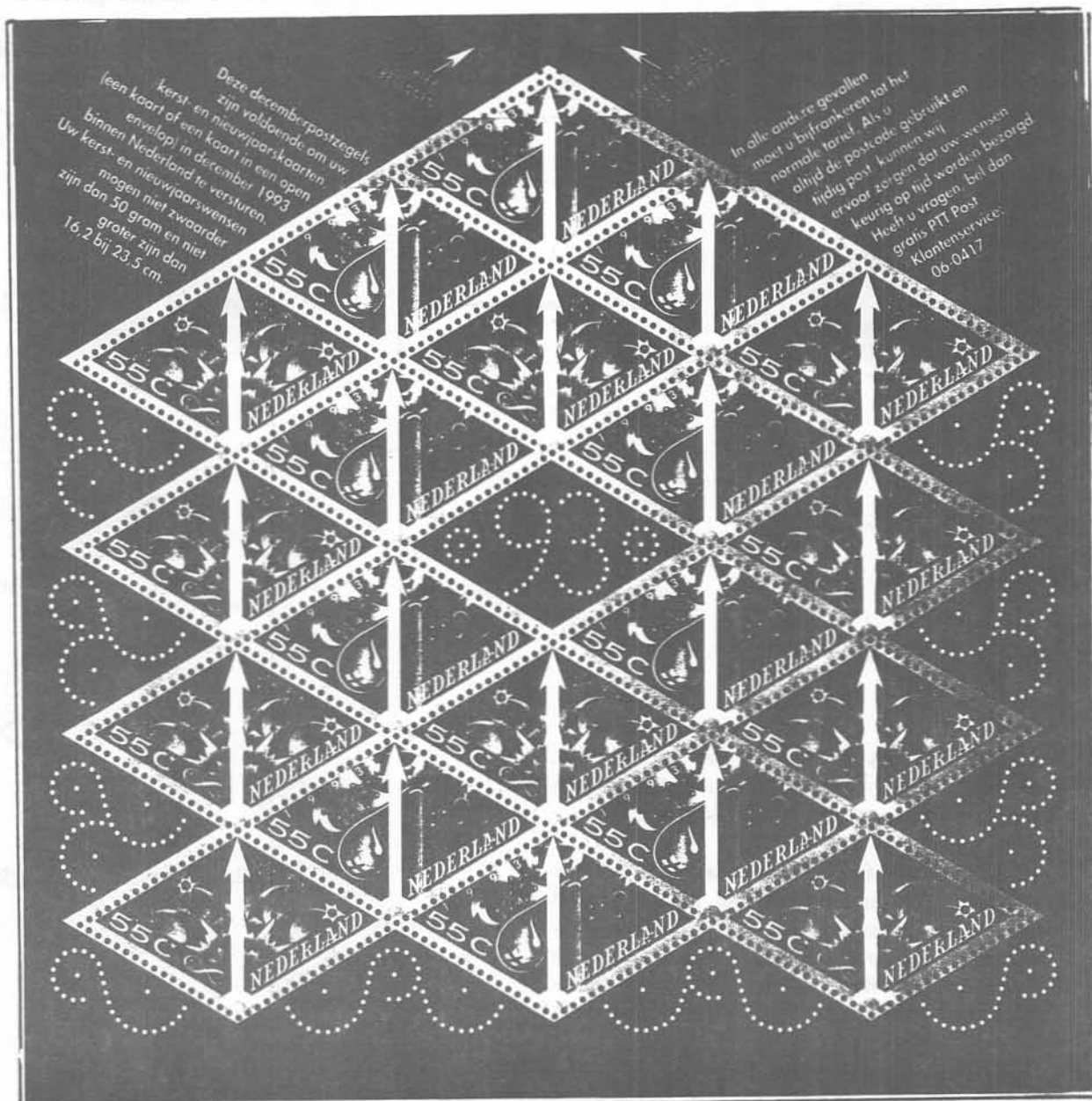


## Perfins Are Alive and Well in The Netherlands

Paul A. Minstretta (L-111)



A February 29, 1994 article in *Linn's Stamp News* entitled "Unusual Perforations on Netherlands..." was my first indication that there was a new officially produced perfin in the world. This perfin was applied to the complete issue of the Netherlands PTT Post's 1993 Holiday (Christmas) stamp. The perfins, which appear to be in a random pattern on the stamps were "... supposed to resemble snowflakes, especially when affixed to white envelopes."

There are two different perfin patterns which are uniquely applied to 2 different diamond shaped stamps issued in a 20 stamp sheetlet. The stamps have been numbered by *Scott's Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue* as #848 (candle, Christmas tree, water, moon & stars; "A" in my illustrations) and #849 "B" (fireworks; in the accompanying illustrations). Both stamps are franked at 55¢ and have a basic dark blue background which makes them difficult to reproduce for illustrations.

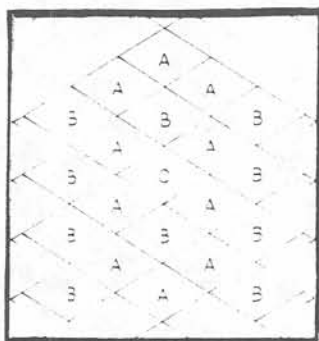
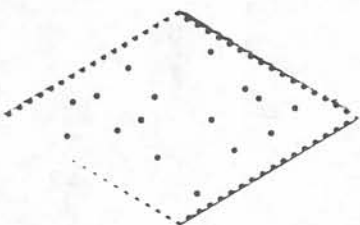
As shown in the accompanying illustration, there are actually 21 items to a sheetlet, 10 of #848, 10 of #849 and a "93" dated seal in the center position. The illustration shows the positions of the two stamps and the seal within the sheetlet. The seal is ornamental, is non-denominated and is not perfinned. The ornamental dots in the seal and selvedge are printed in a bright yellow, not perfinned as they appear. The writing at the top right and left is "how

to" instructions as how best to tear the unusually designed sheet to use the stamps for postage.

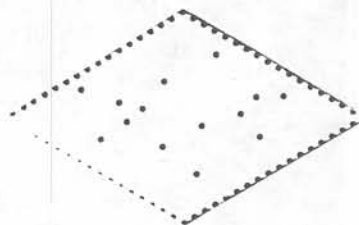
Unlike previous officially applied perfins which changed the value or usage of the stamps (the Hungarian 3-hole triangle perfin which resulted in a surcharge for non-perfined sheets; the Bavarian "E", the Costa Rican "Star", Australia's "V.G." and "O.S." etc. all of which equalled official use only)



A



B



these Netherlands perfins are (as far as I can determine) purely cosmetic, an attempt to enliven the holiday season with a new and different idea.

A quick review of possible se-tenant combinations (including only linear strips and regular shaped blocks) shows a rather large number of combinations. Unfortunately, with only a single "C" pattern in the sheetlet, the resulting number of sheets required to complete the se-tenant combinations is also very high.

Linear block patterns possible (due to the shape of these stamps, the sequences listed below can be found either diagonally up or diagonally down):

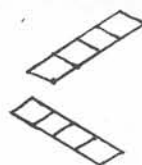


Pairs

- AA
- AB
- BA
- AC
- CA

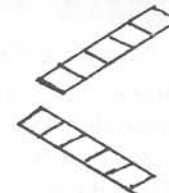
Triples

- AAB
- ABA
- ACA
- BAA
- BAB
- BAC
- CAB



4-in-a-line

- ABAB
- ACAB
- BABA
- BACA



5-in-a-line

- BABAB
- BACAB

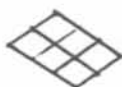
Number of patterns: 34  
 Number requiring "C": 16

Regular shaped blocks:



2 x 2

AA/BA  
AB/AA  
AB/CA  
AC/BA  
BA/AB  
BA/AC  
CA/AB



2 x 3

AA/BA/AB  
AB/CA/AB  
AC/BA/AB  
BA/AB/AA  
BA/AB/CA  
BA/AC/BA



3 x 2

ABA/AAB  
ABA/CAB  
ACA/BAB  
BAA/ABA  
BAB/ACA  
BAC/ABA



3 x 3

BAA/ABA/CAB  
BAB/ACA/BAB  
BAC/ABA/AAB



2 x 4

BABA/ACAB  
BACA/ABAB



4 x 2

BA/AB/CA/AB  
BA/AC/BA/AB

Number of blocks: 25  
Number requiring "C": 19