German States with Coats of Arms

From the collection of David Kiehn, Memphis Stamp Collectors

When World War II ended in 1945 Germany was divided into four occupation zones – American, British, French, and Russian. Each entity issued their own postage stamps although the Americans and British established the Bizone which issued stamps for use in the occupation zones under their control.

Germany was still a divided nation during a period known as the Cold War. However, in May 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany was formed from the American, British, and French occupation zones and was mostly referred to as West Germany. The Russian occupation zone became the German Democratic Republic or East Germany. The city of Berlin, Germany's historic capital, remained under the control of the four powers although, hereto it became known as West Berlin and East Berlin.

Finally, after years of negotiations and the turmoil that led to the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 including the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, a unified Germany seemed possible. East Germany voted to dissolve itself and become part of the Federal Republic of Germany. The reunification of the divided Germany took place in October 1990.

The unified Germany now consisted of sixteen states. Starting alphabetically, Germany issued stamps for each state beginning in 1992. The stamps depicting the coat of arms for each state are shown below.

Bremen   Hamburg   Schleswig-Holstein   Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Niedersachsen   Brandenburg

Nordrhein-Westfalen   Berlin

Rheinland-Pfalz   Sachsen-Anhalt

Saarland   Sachsen

Hessen   Baden-Württemberg   Bayern   Thuringen

Images have been digitally modified for clarity and fit