

# PostmasterGS Stamp Album Page Generator for Scribus v1.5.5

## I. Overview and Installation

**1. Overview.** The PostmasterGS Stamp Album Page Generator (PMGSSAPG) for Scribus is a script that's designed to automate the insertion of frames, photos, and text onto stamp album pages. The script allows the use to build a frame to display the stamp, insert a photo within the frame, and surround it with up to five text boxes of custom text. The stamp data and settings are stored in a spreadsheet.

**2. System Requirements.** PMGSSAPG v1.5.5 requires:

- a. **Scribus.** Tested with Scribus v1.5.8 (developmental version).  
<https://www.scribus.net/downloads/unstable-branch/>  
Some features may not work properly with older or newer versions.
- b. **OpenOffice or LibreOffice.** Tested with LibreOffice 7.3.4.  
<http://www.openoffice.org/download/>  
<http://www.libreoffice.org/download/libreoffice-fresh/>
- c. **NOTE:** Certain previous versions of this software required **Fiji** and **Java SE** due to the photo-straightening feature. This feature has been removed, so those programs are no longer required.
- d. **NOTE:** As Scribus and OpenOffice/LibreOffice are all open source, there are often large, app-breaking changes anytime one or both applications are updated. I've attempted to make sure this version works with the versions of Scribus/LibreOffice listed above, but it's always difficult to test every function of the app with every possible combination of software versions. If you run into something that doesn't appear to be working as intended, please let me know.

## 3. Installation.

- a. The installation packages consists of the following:
  - i. **PMGSSAPG\_scribus\_v1\_5\_5\_batchSS.ods.** This is the OpenOffice/LibreOffice spreadsheet for storing the stamp data and settings.
  - ii. **PMGSSAPG\_scribus\_v1\_5\_5\_batch.txt.** This is the text file that stores the stamp data exported from the spreadsheet prior to its import into Scribus.
  - iii. **PMGSSAPG\_scribus\_v1\_5\_5\_settings.txt.** This is the text file that stores the stamp box design settings exported from the spreadsheet prior to its import into Scribus.
  - iv. **pytSAPG\_v1\_5\_5.py.** This is the Python script that imports the data into Scribus and builds the stamp boxes.

Feldpost Airmail

18 April 1942



Mi 1 A x

Smooth gum

- b. All files must be stored in the same folder.

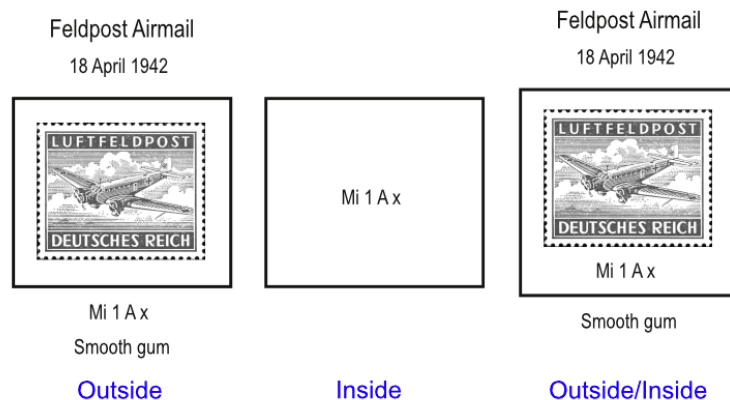
## II. The Spreadsheet

### 1. Understanding the Spreadsheet

- a. Open the spreadsheet in OpenOffice/LibreOffice's spreadsheet program. You'll see several tabs:
  - i. **Settings.** This tab contains the settings that control the appearance of the resulting stamp box.
  - ii. **Fonts.** This tab contains a list of fonts installed on your computer.
  - iii. **Presets.** This tab contains preset settings.
  - iv. **DNG, Feldpost, Allenstein.** These are sample data.

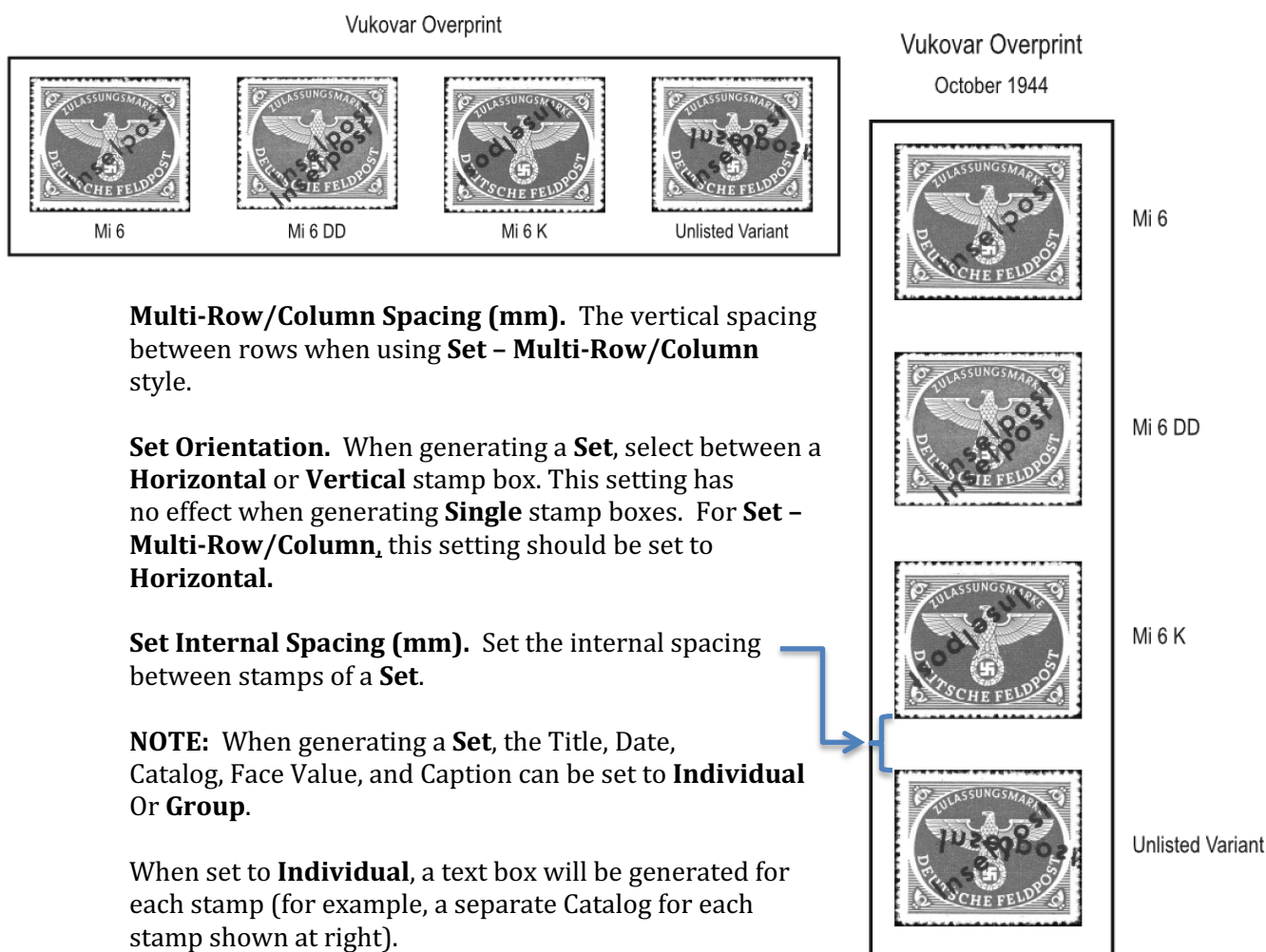
### 2. Settings Tab. Below is a brief explanation of the options on the **Settings** tab.

- a. **Style.** Switch between four styles of stamp box.
  - i. **Outside.** A frame with up to four text boxes and a photo.
  - ii. **Inside - Catalog.** A frame with a single text box in the center containing a catalog number.
  - iii. **Inside - Face Value.** A frame with a single text box in the center containing a face value.
  - iv. **Outside/Inside.** A frame with up to three text boxes outside the frame, and a photo and single text box inside the frame.



- b. **Singles or Set.** Switch between generating boxes containing a single stamp (**Single**) or boxes for multiple stamps (**Set**). The sets can be either in a single row or column (**Set**) or multiple rows/columns (**Set – Multi-Row/Column**)

**NOTE: Single** DOES NOT mean you are restricted to creating a single stamp box at a time. If you select multiple stamps on the spreadsheet, **Single** will generate an individual stamp box for each stamp. **Set** will generate a single set containing all selected stamps on each run.



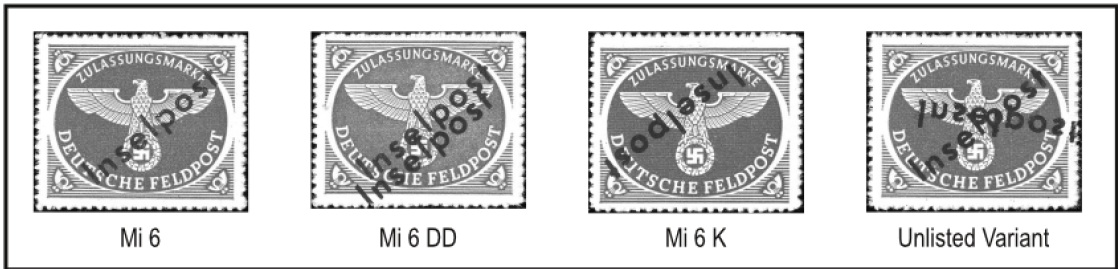
When set to **Group**, a single text box will be generated for the entire set (for example a single Title and Date for the entire set shown at right).

When using a **Group** setting, the text of the single text box is controlled by the first stamp selected in the spreadsheet (**Mi 6** in the example shown).

When using a **Group** setting, care should be exercised with certain combinations. For example, attempting to insert **Individual** data at Top or Bottom of a **Vertical Set** will generate overlapping boxes because **Individual** boxes are positioned relative to the individual stamps, not the box as a whole.

**Set Frame Individual or Group.** (new as of v1.3). This option allows you to choose whether to generate a single frame for a **Set (Group)**, or an individual frame for each stamp within a **Set (Individual)**.

Vukovar Overprint



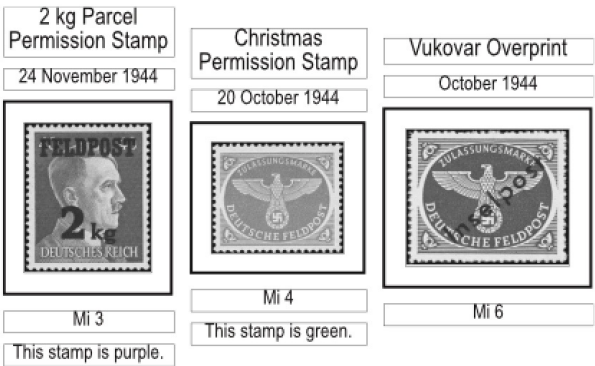
Set with Group Frame

Vukovar Overprint

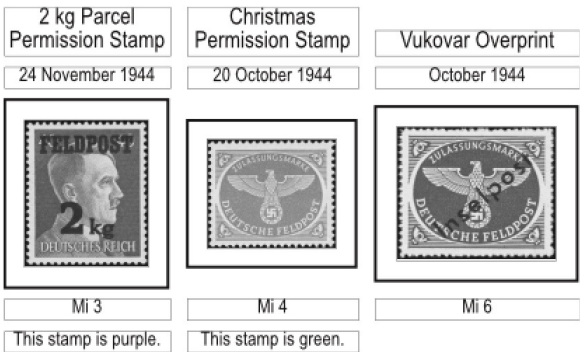


Set with Individual Frames

**Set Text Box Alignment w/ Individual Frames.** When generating a **Set** using **Individual** frames, this option allows you to choose whether to align individual text boxes across the set (**Group**), or solely with respect to the individual frame (**Individual**).

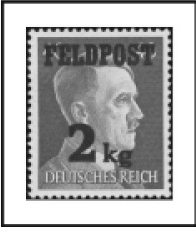




Text boxes aligned solely to their frame (**Individual**)

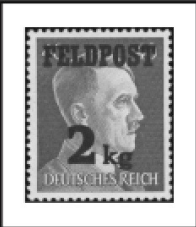




Text boxes aligned across the set (**Group**)




**Set Frame Alignment w/ Individual Frames in Set.** When generating a **Set** using **Individual** frames, this option allows you to choose how to align the frames. For **Horizontal Sets**, the options are to align frames at the **Top**, **Center**, or **Bottom**. For **Vertical Sets**, the options are to align frames at the **Left**, **Center**, or **Right**.

2 kg Parcel Permission Stamp 24 November 1944	Christmas Permission Stamp 20 October 1944	Vukovar Overprint October 1944
		
Mi 3 This stamp is purple.	Mi 4 This stamp is green.	Mi 6

Frames aligned at **Top**.

2 kg Parcel Permission Stamp 24 November 1944	Christmas Permission Stamp 20 October 1944	Vukovar Overprint October 1944
		
Mi 3 This stamp is purple.	Mi 4 This stamp is green.	Mi 6

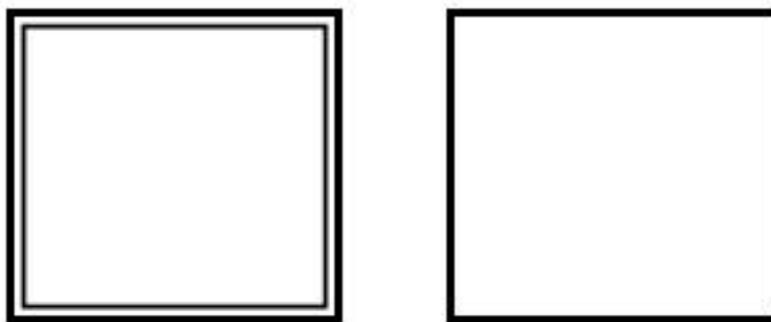
Frames aligned at **Center**.

2 kg Parcel Permission Stamp 24 November 1944	Christmas Permission Stamp 20 October 1944	Vukovar Overprint October 1944
		
Mi 3 This stamp is purple.	Mi 4 This stamp is green.	Mi 6

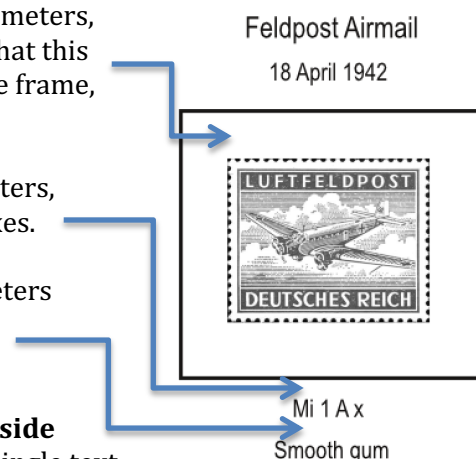
Frames aligned at **Bottom**.

- c. **Frame.** This section controls the appearance of the frame into which the stamps are inserted.

- i. **Frame Style.** Controls whether the frame is outside the stamp (**External**) or hidden underneath the stamp (**Internal**). If **Internal**, the resulting frame will be 90% the size of the stamp. When using **Internal**, you are limited to generation of **Single** stamp boxes only (no **Sets**).



- ii. **Double Frame.** Allows for insertion of a double-lined frame.
- iii. **Double Frame Spacing.** Controls the spacing, in millimeters, between the inner and outer frames of a double frame.
- iv. **Outer Frame Thickness.** Controls the width, in points, of the outer frame (single and double frame).
- v. **Inner Frame Thickness.** Controls the width, in points of the inner frame (double frame only).
- d. **Padding (Stamp to Frame).** Sets the distance, in millimeters, between the stamp and the surrounding frame. Note that this does not control the spacing between the *photo* and the frame, but rather the *stamp itself* and the frame.
- e. **Margin (Frame to Text).** Sets the distance, in millimeters, between the outer frame and any surrounding text boxes.
- f. **Vertical Spacing.** Sets the vertical distance, in millimeters between text boxes when two or more text boxes are positioned on the same side of the frame.
- g. **Outside/Inside Spacing.** When using the **Outside/Inside** style, controls the spacing between the photo and the single text box inside the frame.
- h. **Text Boxes.** This script allows the user to insert up to four text boxes per stamp. On the **Settings** tab, these text boxes are labeled as *Title*, *Date*, *Catalog*, and *Caption*.





As the options for these four text boxes are identical, they will be discussed here as one.

**NOTE:** If using the **Inside** style, you are limited to a single text box inside the stamp frame. For **Inside - Catalog** style, the **Catalog** text box settings control the appearance and content of the single text box. For **Inside - Face Value** style, the **Face Value** text box settings control the appearance and content of the single text box. All other text boxes are disabled with the **Inside** style.

- i. **Include.** This value determines whether the text box is *on* or *off*. If a text box is *off*, any data entered in the rest of the text box's settings will be disregarded by the script.
- ii. **Percentage of Frame Width.** This value controls the width of the text box, measuring the width as a percentage of the frame width (**Single, Set** with **Group** setting) or percentage of the stamp width (**Set** with **Individual** setting).



This is a demonstration of the function of the text box's "Percentage of Frame Width" setting.

*100% of frame width*



This is a demonstration of the function of the text box's "Percentage of Frame Width" setting.

*150% of frame width*

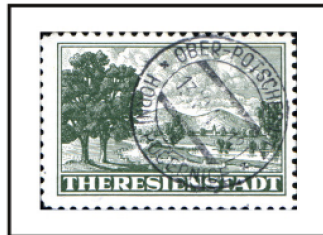
- iii. **Font.** Set the font of the text box. The font list is pulled from the list of installed fonts on the **Fonts** tab.
- iv. **Font Size.** Set the font size.
- v. **Font Spacing.** Set the font spacing. 1 = single spaced, 2 = double spaced, etc.
- vi. **Text Alignment.** Set the text alignment within the text box to *left*, *center*, *right*, or *justified*.
- vii. **Global and Individual Styles.** In Scribus, it's possible to link text boxes to a particular predefined **character style**. If this is done, editing the settings of the predefined **character style** (accessed using the F3 key) changes the settings of all text boxes linked to that style. For example, if a series of text boxes is linked to a **character style** named "Title", editing the font of the **character style** "Title" changes the font of all linked text boxes.

The **Global / Individual** selection for each text box controls whether the text boxes you insert are linked to a **character style (Global)** or not (**Individual**). If a text box is inserted as **Individual**, its style will not change upon editing the master **character style**. Instead, to change the settings, they must be edited individually.

Also, when **Global** is selected, the master **character style** settings in the document are changed to reflect the settings exported from the spreadsheet. In other words, if you insert a Title text box with a *Times New Roman* font of size 12 and a **Global** setting, all Title text boxes in the document which are linked to the master Title **character style** will be changed to *Times New Roman 12*.

As of **v1.3.5**, an option exists within the **Face Value** settings to have a **Global – Small Caps** style. This is a **Global** style with all text in small caps. This option is currently only available within the **Face Value** settings.

- viii. **Set Individual or Group.** This option determines whether, when using a **Set**, a single text box is generated (**Group**), or a text box is generated for each stamp within the set (**Individual**). See **NOTE** on page 3 of this manual for a detailed description.
- ix. **End-of-Line Hyphenation.** This setting determines whether words at the end of a line will be hyphenated or wrapped to the following line.



This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting. This is a block of text to demonstrate the hyphenation setting.



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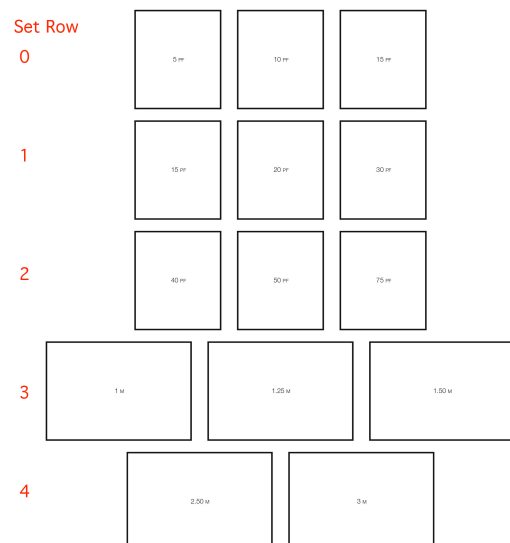
- i. **Photo.** The **Photo** option allows the user to insert a photo within the stamp frame.



- i. **Include.** Turns the photo *on* or *off*.
  - ii. **Grayscale.** Converts the photo to grayscale.
  - iii. **Size Ratio.** Sets the size of the photo as a percentage of the actual size of the stamp. This allows the photo to be shrunk slightly so as to avoid being visible behind a mounted stamp.
- j. **Layout.** These options determine where the text boxes are placed in relation to the stamp frame.
- h. **Stack Order.** These settings determine the order in which the text boxes are stacked vertically, from Stack 1 (topmost) to Stack 5 (bottommost). Each Stack field must be unique, meaning for example, “Title” should not be listed for both Stack 1 and Stack 3.
3. **Font Tab.** The **Font** tab contains a list of all fonts installed on your computer. The list should be refreshed on first use of the spreadsheet by clicking the **Refresh Fonts** icon on the **PMGS Toolbar**. This list provides the font names for the **Font** input boxes on the **Settings** tab.
4. **Presets Tab.** This tab contains preset settings, including those the user saves as presets.
5. **Sample Data Tabs.** These tabs contain sample data.

- a. **Use of the “Page Offset” column.** Prior to version 1.2.7, all boxes were inserted on the page which the user was on when the script was run. Version 1.2.7 added the ability to generate boxes on multiple pages in the same run. The **Page Offset** value tells the script on which pages to insert the boxes. A value of zero (0) inserts those boxes on the current page, similar to the traditional placement. Values other than zero offset the placement by the given number of pages – ex. a value of two (2) will place those boxes 2 pages after the current page. If necessary, the script will generate new pages to accommodate the offset – ex., if on page 4 of 4 when running the script, yet you have boxes with an offset of 2, the script will create new pages 5 and 6 so the offset boxes will be properly placed on page 6.

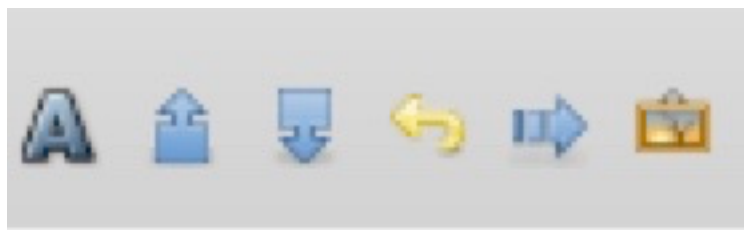
- b. **Use of the “Set Row” column.** When using the **Set – Multi-Row/Column** style, this determine which row the individual stamps will be placed in. Rows are numbered from the top of the page, beginning with “0”.



6. **Important Limitations in Using the Spreadsheet.** The spreadsheet is designed such that the user can keep data permanently in the spreadsheet, with separate tabs for different collecting areas, etc. There are a few limitations, however.

- a. **New Columns.** The user can add new columns to the spreadsheet. New columns must not be inserted between **Columns A** and **K**. When the data is exported from the spreadsheet to the text files, it is in a very specific order and format. Scribus then uses the columns to determine what data goes in what blanks. The addition or deletion of columns between **Columns A** and **K** will throw off the export and lead to unpredictable, incorrect results.
- b. **New Worksheets.** The user can add new tabs to track other collecting areas. However, to create a new tab, the user should delete the data from a sample tab or copy an existing tab and delete the existing data, not create a new, blank tab. Again, this is to preserve the very strict formatting requirements of the export / import process.

6. **Using the Spreadsheet.** The spreadsheet has a custom toolbar at the top with six options.



- a. **Refresh Fonts.** See 3. Above.
- b. **Save as Preset.** Saves current settings as a Preset.
- c. **Load a Preset.** Load settings from a Preset.
- d. **Reset Includes.** Resets the **Include?** On all entries to **FALSE**.
- e. **Export.** Exports the settings and selected stamp data to the text files for import into Scribus.
- f. **Insert Photo.** Opens a dialog box which allows the user to select a photo. Upon selection, the filepath to the photo is inserted in the active cell. This prevents the user from having to manually enter the filepath to any photos.

#### IV. Scribus.

- 1. **Open.** Open Scribus to an existing or new document.
- 2. **Running the Script.** Select the page on which you want the stamp boxes inserted, then select **Script, Execute Script**, and select the script file (**pytSAPG\_v1\_5\_4.py**). After running the

script once, it should be available under **Script, Recent Scripts**, alleviating the need to re-select the file every time.

### **Version History.**

- v1.5.5 (20220704)** - Fixed error with using non-ASCII characters in text fields
- v1.5.4 (20220628)** - Fixed bug in Presets
- v1.5.3 (20220628)** - Added ability to generate multi-page with Set & Set – Multi-Row/Column
- v1.5.2 (20220627)** - Updated to work with latest versions of Scribus & LibreOffice
- v1.4.5 (20180623)** - Added ability to generate multi-row/column style
- v1.3.5 (20170330)** - Added Face Value field  
- Added Inside – Face Value style  
- Added ability to set stack order of text boxes
- v1.3 (20170325)** - Added ability to generate single frames within sets  
- Removed need for end used to manually set filepaths
- v1.2.7 (20170212)** - Added ability to generate single boxes across multiple pages
- v1.2.3 (20150317)** - Fixed bug with font spacing in Global-style text boxes  
- Added ability to hyphenate at end-of-line in text boxes  
- Added ability to save/load preset settings  
- Changed spreadsheet export from exporting all data sheets at once to exporting a single sheet, by selection
- v1.2.1 (20150309)** - Added the ability to set font spacing within the text boxes
- v1.2 (20150308)** - Complete rewrite of underlying code to make future expansion possible  
- Added ability to generate Internal frames  
- Minor bug fixes
- v1.1 (20150301)** - Removed Fiji/Jython integration due to compatibility issues  
- Added ability to generate boxes for Sets of stamps  
- Added ability to independently set padding of all four sides
- v1.04 (20130706)** - Added Fiji/Jython script to rotate stamp scans, crop them, and return the stamp dimensions
- v1.03 (20130622)** - Added ability to set vertical spacing between photo and interior text box when using “Outside/Inside” style boxes
- v1.02 (20130622)** - Fixed minor errors in placement of text boxes in certain combinations  
- Added ability to use “Outside/Inside” style boxes

**v1.01 (20130621)**

- Fixed minor errors in placement of text boxes in certain combinations
- Fixed bug with measurements if document was using units other than points
- Added ability to tie text boxes to custom character styles

**v1.0 (20130619)**

- Initial release

Special thanks to Andy Pastuszak (apastuszak), <http://www.stamphacks.com/>, for suggestions, beta testing, and bug fixes.