

Up to the end of the first World War, when different countries, it seems, had not yet woken up to the great possibilities of the postage stamp as a means of propaganda as well as a source of revenue, the first six Congresses of the Universal Postal Union were left to pass philatelically "unhonoured and unsung", whereas all following ones from the seventh, held in 1920 at Madrid to the sixteenth held in 1969 in Tokyo have all been duly commemorated by a stamp or a set of stamps. Amongst these are included three rare and expensive sets of stamps of Sweden for the eight Congress, which incidentally was issued along with another set of the same number of stamps to mark the 50th Anniversary of the U.P.U. The set of 1929 of Great Britain to mark the 9th Congress has been registering fantastic rises in value and no doubt has a brilliant future.

In 1949 the 75th Anniversary of the Foundation of the U.P.U. was philatelically commemorated by all member countries and a truly omnibus issue celebrated the event. The first centenary of the U.P.U. fell in 1974 and this yet more important event has been befittingly commemorated by member countries and an omnibus issue celebrated the event.

Thus the Universal Postal Union was one hundred years old last year and I venture to state that it is one of the oldest, if not the oldest international organization in existence; a living monument to true collaboration and goodwill of people of different races, languages and creeds, continually doing a sterling service to the many millions of people throughout the vastness of our terrestrial globe.

Dr. J.H. Mercieca.

* In part this article is based on material published in the consolidated Encyclopedia, 1939.

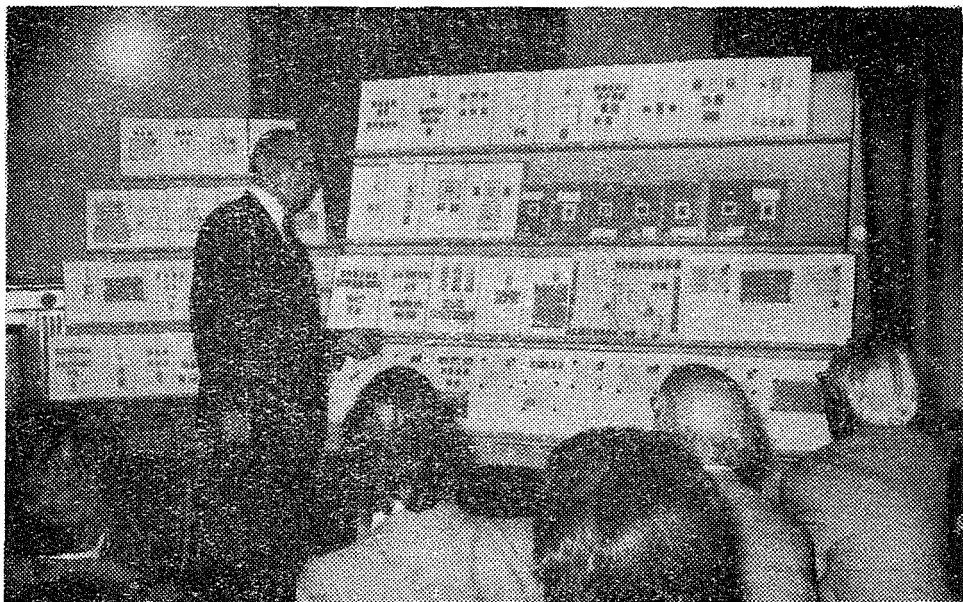
DR. K. CLOUGH'S VISIT TO MALTA

The monthly meeting of the Society for May was different from the usual meeting in that for the occasion we had a guest speaker who also displayed his specialised and vast collection of Malta. Dr. Kenneth Clough comes from the vicinity of Manchester and he is no new comer to Malta, having served here in 1945 as a Naval Medical Officer at Manoel Island and has since then visited Malta on four occasions.

It was during his stay in Malta in 1945 that he took a fancy for Malta stamps which he started collecting in earnest and in which he has maintained an unabated interest up to the present day.

Dr. Clough is a founder member of the Malta Study Circle, and in this connection, the President of the Society, Dr. J.H. Mercieca, in a welcoming speech before the meeting, held on Monday, 5th May, 1975, expressed pleasure in welcoming "amongst us members of the circle as I feel that these contacts between the two societies serve to further strengthen the ties of friendship and collaboration between us".

Dr. Clough has exhibited parts of his Malta collection at various Exhibitions in the United Kingdom. In 1970, he won a silver-gilt medal for his entry of Malta Proofs and Specimens at the British Philatelic Exhibition. For the same entry he won a silver medal at Philympia in the same year.



At Stampex 1969 he won a silver medal for his collection of the Malta ½d yellows. At Stampex, last year he also won a silver-bronze medal for his collection of G.B. stamps used in Malta.

At the meeting, the guest speaker displayed a wide range of his Malta collection, ranging from the early postal service of the Order of Knights of Malta up to early issues of Malta. No amount of space will do justice to Dr. Clough's remarkable display. Suffice to say that his opening "piece de resistance" was a 1603 letter written in old style french by Henry de Marles de Beauchamp, Knight of Malta, to his mother in Avignon, relating how he suffered heavy injuries in the fighting against the Turks. Other pages from his vast collection were related to the Crimean War Mail and Soldier's letters, Lazaretto markings, G.B. stamps used in Malta, complete 'specimens' sets as well as 'proofs', and studies of the Malta ½d yellow.

Members present at the gathering, could for the first time view some of the best examples of postal markings ever seen in Malta. And it is through these columns that we thank Dr. A. Bonnici, through whose initiative, Dr. K. Clough's visit to Malta was made possible.

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