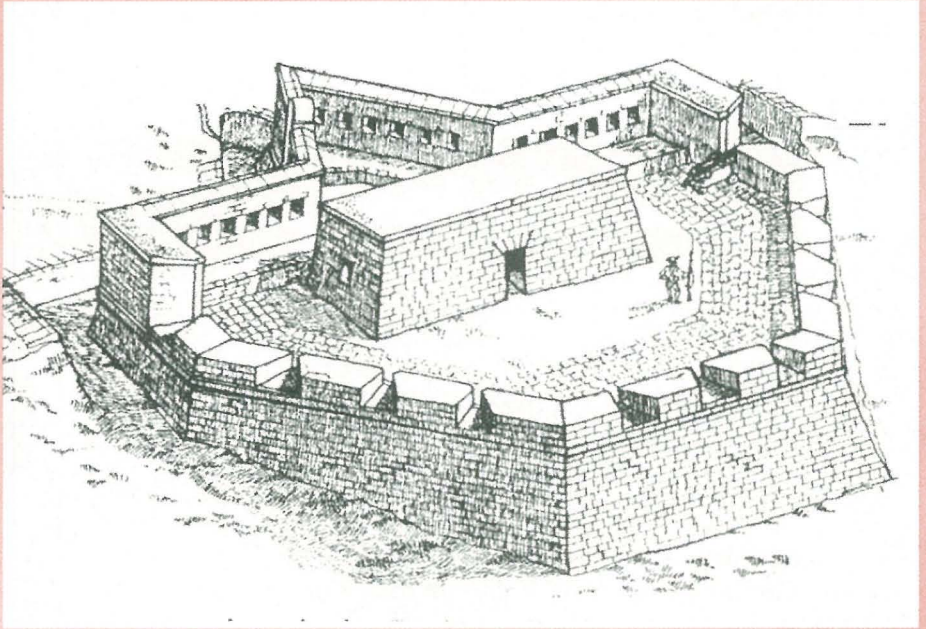


Jan - Mar 2008

No. 31 - 1/2008



# GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY

*Newsletter*

### Members' Meetings

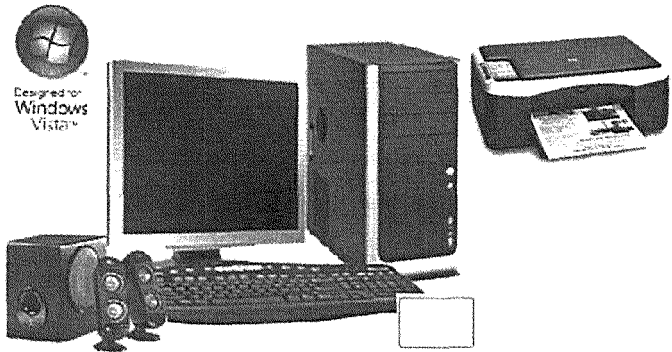
are held regularly on the last Sunday of the month:  
24 Feb                      30 March                      27 April                      25 May  
from 9.00am to 11 .00am  
at Victoria Scouts HQ (Triq Santa Dminka).  
exchange, purchase, information etc.  
Entrance Free!

- Please note that members can contact the Secretary for free temporary loan of various philatelic publications - a list will be shown in a future issue.
- When sending by post, use only cheques drawn on Maltese banks (or Money Orders) or mint Malta Euro stamps to pay your subscription or acquire items shown. Stamps with values in old currency are not accepted.
- Membership fees include Newsletter delivery and so that for overseas members is Euro 12 - they can use Money Orders or new currency notes.
- Members can acquire a copy of our Statute (approved during the 5<sup>th</sup> AGM) by contacting the Secretary – it can also be downloaded from our Website.
- Young members who will renew their membership for year 2008 will be given a token of free stamps. Now is the time to renew your membership.
- We also welcome letters asking for help regarding stamp identification etc. Anything published will merit a philatelic gift! And Juniors will receive a memento in any case!

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# GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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..... Post Code.....

Tel No. .... ID Card No .....

I enclose annual membership fee for €5.00

Signature

Date

Being under 16, I enclose €2.00 for Junior membership. (Date of Birth.....)

Signature

Date

Introduced by..... Member No .....

I acknowledge receipt of membership application from

.....  
with relative fee of .....

An official receipt and membership card will be issued later.

.....  
(signed obo Gozo Philatelic Society)

Date



**GPS NEWSLETTER**  
**Quarterly Organ**  
**of**  
**THE GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY**

*First issued on 12th February 2000*

*Editor: Austin Masini*

Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the Committee's official policy.

Correspondence (and material for publication) should be addressed to: Editor, GPS, PO Box 10, VCT 1000, Gozo, Malta.

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**GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY**

***Founded on 3rd September 1999***

For "the promotion of the hobby"

"the provision of a point of reference" and "co-ordination"

*Postal address: PO Box 10, VCT 1000, Gozo, Malta.*

## GPS DIARY (31)

*Antoine Vassallo (Secretary)*

**December 2007:** Newsletter 30 includes an index of contents in issues 11 to 30.

**29th December 2007:** Anthony Grech prepares covers for the Magri and Carolina Cauchi stamps.

**4th January 2008:** Last meeting for the outgoing committee.

**13th January 2008:** Annual General Meeting (and Exhibition Prize-giving) at Scouts Head Quarters. (see pages 3 to 6.)

**19th January 2008:** First meeting of new committee. Posts were allocated as follows: Anton Said President, Anthony Grech (Membership Secretary), Antoine Vassallo (Secretary-Treasurer), Paul Cini (Assistant Treasurer), Mary Grace Xerri (PRO), Emanuel Vella (Exchange Packets), George Micallef (Equipment Manager), Rev. Fr Gerald Buhagiar (Chaplain), Austin Masini (Newsletter Editor), Samuel Masini (Webmaster), Lina Gauci (Website Sales) and Frankie Vella, Louis Attard and David Calleja (members). The committee also decided the conditions for listing **Wants** and **For Sale** items on our Website.

**27th January 2008:** Monthly Members meeting at Victoria Scouts Headquarters.

## **Eighth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (13.01.2008)**

### ***Secretary - Treasurer's Report***

I intend giving a straightforward bird's eye view of the 12 months since our last AGM:

- At the first Committee meeting following the 7th AGM, posts were confirmed: Anton Said (President), Antoine Vassallo (Secretary-Treasurer), Anthony Grech (Membership Secretary), Mary Grace Xerri (Public Relations Officer), Austin Masini (Newsletter Editor), Emmanuel Vella (Exchange Packets) and Rev Dr Gerald Buhagiar (Chaplain). The other committee members were David Calleja, Lina Gauci, George Micallef and Frankie and George Vella. Seven further formal meetings were held to prepare our various activities and discuss plans.
- As usual, the 8th Exhibition in November consumed substantial efforts – another successful edition! Prizes and participation certificates are being distributed this morning. We again also remembered our dear Tony Fenech.
- This Exhibition marked a red-letter date for the Society since our Website [www.stamps-gozo.org](http://www.stamps-gozo.org) was officially launched on opening night by its *factotum* himself, and Samuel (as webmaster) is present to give us an updated report.
- A stamp display was organized during a public lecture about Emvin Cremona at the Gozo Ministry Hall.
- The GPS participated in the Gozo NGOs Association stand at the Naxxar *Fiera tal-Volontarjat* in May and in the Spring Fair at Cremona Lyceum Complex (during the *Lapsi* event).
- Anthony Grech continued preparing covers for stamps or handstamps with Gozo connections: EU, Balconies stamps, Toys, San Lawrenz and Xlendi sub-postoffices, Mgarr and Xlendi Scenery stamps, Exhibition and Magri and Cauchi stamps.
- We continued offering regular Members' Meetings on the last Sunday of each month, only possible with the cooperation of the Victoria Scout Group administration, whose HQ we use.

## GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY

- Contacts are ongoing with the Gozo College administration. Committee members visited schools and have now begun regular sessions at a boys' secondary school. They also participated in a Summer Club.
- On a sombre note, a mass was said for the repose of the President's son.
- Details about all this (and much more) are given in our quarterly Newsletter. More junior and new contributors are ardently invited to send letters, comments and articles. Of course I must not forget that we now have a new medium!
- We continue to participate on community radios and other media. I also mention that various foreign publications (including the German *il-Maltija*) featured our society. Gratefully, local media gave quite a lot of attention to the GPS exhibition and our other activities.
- Various members donate stamps and periodicals. We do have an increasing range of philatelic publications for free perusal and loan (listed on the Website). I recommend the incoming committee to organize this aspect on a sustainably practical basis.

Having also landed again with the **Treasurer's** post, I do not want to bother you with too many figures:

At the last AGM I presented a balance of **LM 687.16c**  
During the year since, total income (including membership fees, exhibition applications, surplus on sales of philatelic material and productions, donations and bank interest was **LM 664.16c**  
**LM1351.32c**

In the same period total expenditure (including Newsletter printing, exhibition prizes and other expenses, website hosting, postage, photocopying and stationery) was **LM 558.22c**  
Thus the balance carried forward is **LM 793.10c**  
which can be translated into the impressive figure of **€1867.43**

I finally note that the Society has no pending liabilities but possesses these further assets:

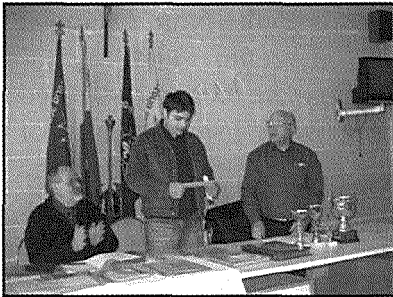
- A. Exhibition stands and other equipment
- B. Publications (for reference and for issue on loan)
- C. Stamps and other Philatelic material (for sale and as gifts).



## **Eighth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (13.01.2008) *President's Report***

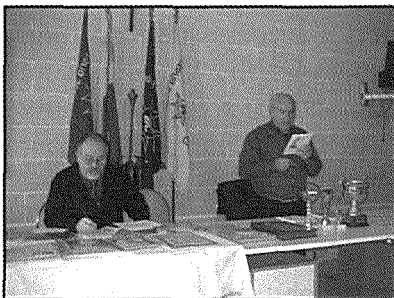
This year's AGM 2008 was held at the Scouts Headquarters, Victoria for which a considerable number of members from the Gozo Philatelic Society attended.

The meeting started by the society's secretary giving an account of the out going year's calendar of events, followed by a financial statement of the society's accounts.



Mr Samuel Masini, a keen member then explained in detail the website he created for the society and the professional work it entailed together with the difficulties encountered, until the product was finished to perfection. He also explained

and gave detailed statistics of the number of individuals from various countries who entered our website. This information was most welcome.

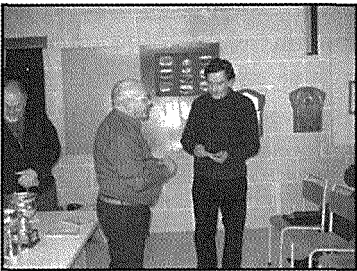


It was then the turn of the society's president to make his address. He remarked that it is considered that the society's greatest achievement last year was the set up of the society's website thanks to Mr Samuel Masini, who proved

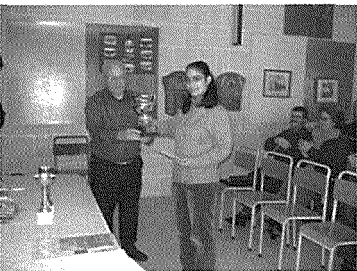


himself to be a real expert in the matter. Mr Antoine Vassallo, Mr Anthony Grech and Rev Fr Gerard Buhagiar gave also a helping hand in this issue. Another point which was stressed in his address was the need for new faces in the society's committee, thus giving their contribution by putting forward new and fresh ideas for the society to move further on.

It was also reported that frequent visits to the Ninu Cremona Junior Lyceum and Boys' Secondary are being organized twice a week in an attempt of setting up a school philatelic club on the premises, which up to now the interest shown looks very encouraging.



The president then thanked the members of the outgoing committee for their sterling work in their various sections and to all those who contributed towards the society's success, not forgetting the sponsors, the Victoria Scout Group and the Vassallo Family for offering us premises for our meetings.



The meeting came to an end by a prize giving ceremony for all the participants in last year's annual philatelic exhibition.

## MALTA OVERSEAS

*local connections on foreign stamps (4)*

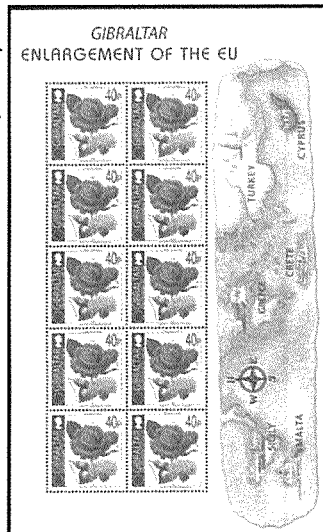
*(Antoine Vassallo)*

On 15<sup>th</sup> September 2003, Gibraltar issued a set of 4 stamps to celebrate in advance – and using a “surprising” theme - the 2004 European Union enlargement. It showed flowers from the new members; thus the 40p featured a rose (Cyprus) and a “Maltese Centaury”. This latter is known as our national flower and called *widnet il-bahar*. It had already been represented in a Maltese set (1971, also including the *merill* as our national bird).

*Centawrja* actually includes a wide range of plants (*compositae* genus, and others) which tend to grow quite strongly, especially on cliffs. Local varieties include the *bajda* (white), *roza* (pink), *safra* (yellow) and *xewwekija* (thorny). The *centawrja Maltija* covers two different ones. That producing yellowish flowers is known dialectically as *xewk Malti*, *xewk il-ghotba* or *salib tal-kavallieri*. The *widnet* (usually with bluish lilac flowers and a characteristic foliage) prefers solitary habitats in April and August, Ta’ Cenc and Dwejra being especially noted for its presence. After having been cultivated in Malta’s Botanic Gardens, it was exported successfully.

Our national plant was first described in 1827 by prolific scientist Stefano Zerafa (Professor of Medicine at the University) who gave it the scientific descriptive name of *centaurea spathulata zeraphi* but botanists tended to prefer the later *crassifolia* suggested by the Italian Bertolini. Professor John Borg (shown on the 1974 Personalities 3c) strongly defended Zerafa’s claim a century after in his monumental “Descriptive Flora of the Maltese Islands”.

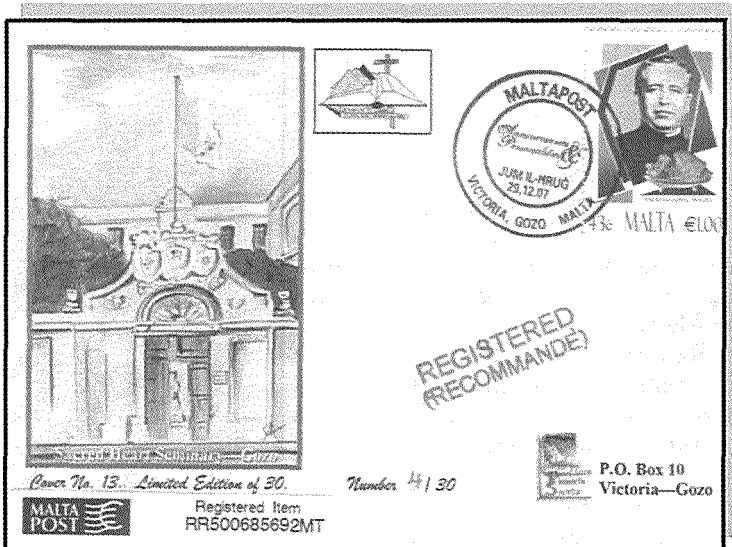
Reverting to Gibraltar’s set, it was designed by Antonia Enthoven and printed in sheetlets of ten by De La Rue. Each had enlarged illustrated right-hand margins showing outline maps of the new “neighbour” states. Malta was considered as neighbouring Cyprus through the Mediterranean Sea!



## Magri's Gozo Connection

Although not noted in Maltapost's official documentation, Patri Manwel Magri had a strong connection with Gozo. This led the GPS to decide to produce a cover on the occasion of the Celebrities stamp on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2007, as we try to do on any similar opportunity.

In 1892 he became Prefect of Studies at the Gozo Seminary (then run by the Jesuits); he continued as Rector (1902-6), during which period he faced complaints from the Cathedral Chapter who seemed to want "full control" [A Azzopardi: Jesuit Schools in Malta]. During these years of duty in Gozo "he began his collection of folktales and proverbs and roamed the island in search of archeological sites" [S Mallia – *Melita Historica* 9:2]. He brought the *Torri ta' l-Imramma* temple at Ta' Cenc (discovered by him, but where legal complications had cropped up) to the attention of German archeologist Albert Mayr.



Confirming a local tradition, in 1903 Magri discovered the ground floor of a Phoenician (or “Megalithic”) Temple on private property in Xewkija and asked for urgent public funds to remove the soil. He was in fact worried by plans to build houses in the area. Works began the next year as soon as Government funding was provided: ashes, pottery and bones were found. The sowing season proved quite restrictive and winter stopped all progress. Despite Magri’s efforts, no more developments took place and the site is now covered by the new monumental parish church. The Government actually printed 500 copies of his scholarly report in 1906.

In 1903 too Patri Magri wrote to the Governor complaining of vandalism on the “Giants’ Tower” (i.e. Xaghra’s Ggantija Temples) and shortly after succeeded in convincing the then proprietor (Marquis Cassar Desain) to loan the Museum the broken “sacred cone or pillar”. Some distance away, he also discovered large monoliths and stones at “*Il-Gorf*”.

Further discoveries of his included the ruins at *il-Haggarija* (Victoria) and those of a “megalithic tomb” (on the road to Ghajnsielem - but the owner asked the “exorbitant” price of £35 for purchase by the state). This latter case (and an incident of wanton destruction in Kercem) led Fr Magri to recommend legislation to help preserve antiquities, resulting in the 1910 Ordinance. He generally did his utmost to bring to the attention of the authorities all cases where he saw dangers to conservation and in fact took the initiative to transfer artefacts to the Valletta or Victoria museums. The Vajringa Public Library was also a recipient.

To mention another aspect of his interests, I add to this selective overview the point that Fr Magri noted that vowel pronunciation in Victoria was identical to that in parts of Syria – a point in his “pro-Punic” argumentations.

*Antoine Vassallo*

## Where in the World ?! (22)

(Antoine Vassallo)

### Stamp Issuers Past and Present

**GUATEMALA:** Central American Republic with stamps from 1871.

**GUERNSEY:** Bailiwick in the Channel Islands with independent postal administration from 1969 after Great Britain regional issues (with symbols but no inscription) from 1958; German occupation issues 1941-4; also separate issues for Alderney from 1983.

**Guiana:** British, French and Dutch (on the northern coast of South America).

*Guine Portuguesa* = Portuguese Guinea.

**GUINEA:** Republic in West Africa from 1959, formerly French Guinea.

**GUINEA-BISSAU:** West African state with stamps from 1974, formerly Portuguese Guinea.

*Guinea Ecuatorial* = Equatorial Guinea.

*Guinea Espanola* = Spanish Guinea.

*Guinee* = French Guinea.

**GUNMA:** Separate stamps for this Japanese prefecture were issued from 1991.

**GUYANA:** the former colony of British Guiana on the northern coast of South America, with stamps from 1966.

*Guyane Francaise* = French Guiana.

**Gwalior:** Indian state with own issues 1885-1951.

*H* = Greek “e”.

*H* = Cyrillic “n”.

**Hadramaut:** see Qu’aiti.

**HAITI:** Republic on the western part of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola with stamps from 1881.

**Hamburg:** German city-state with own stamps 1859-67.

**Hanover:** Kingdom with own stamps 1850-66; now part of Germany.

**Hatay:** town in Syria with 1938 French administration stamps (*Alexandrette*) and 1939 Turkish administration stamps - ceded to Turkey and now called Antakya.

*Haute-Silesie* = Upper Silesia.

(to be continued)

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***Bold italic*** = Inscriptions;

**BOLD CAPITALS** = Current Issuers;

**Bold** = Former Issuers.

(Since it is obviously impossible to be completely exhaustive, you are encouraged to bring any gaps to my notice!)

## PROMOTING GOZO THROUGH PHILATELY

(Antoine Vassallo)



### QALA

The set of four stamps issued on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1971 commemorated two different Religious Anniversaries: the 50<sup>th</sup> from the coronation of the *Vitorja* statue and the centenary of the proclamation of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.

For the latter (2 and 10 pence), the titular painting at Qala parish church was chosen. This was painted in 1899 by Giuseppe Cali', a prolific artist who is widely honoured as the founder of the modern school of Maltese painting. It was solemnly crowned in 1971 by Cardinal Giovanni Colombo but ten years later the crown was stolen; so in 1999 a gold and diamond replacement was fixed to the painting.



The church - designed by Fr Joseph Diacono (the then parish priest) in a baroque style - was built between 1882 and 1889, consecrated in 1904 (with a centennial handstamp in 2004) and expanded during the twentieth century. Renowned Maltese painter Ganni Vella decorated the apse between 1943 and 1966 with episodes from the life of St Joseph. It features many other paintings (including the *Salus Infirmorum* Marian one which is considered miraculous), together with an interesting baptismal font made from Qala stone and various statues. The gilded titular statue, brought over from the Marseilles firm of *Gallard & Fils* towards the end of the nineteenth century, is carried in procession around the streets of the village during the annual *fešta* on the first Sunday of August. A small museum consisting mostly of prehistoric pottery from the many Qala sites was latterly added.

Actually Qala's parish church is not dedicated to St. Joseph alone, but also to the Immaculate Conception; all three churches in Qala

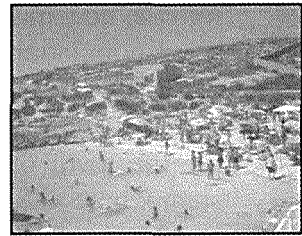


are dedicated to Our Lady under this title. The smallest is the *tal-Blat* chapel, supposedly built to enable Comino residents to follow Mass from across the strait when rough weather precluded a priest from crossing over!

The much more famous Qala Sanctuary has long been a pilgrimage base and boasts of numerous legends: the site has been graced by a Christian church since times immemorial. Tradition holds that Count Roger the Norman prayed there in the twelfth century. The origins of the (modern) adjacent cemetery are likewise buried in the mists of time. Graffiti depicting three-hundred-year-old ships can be seen on the outside wall of the sanctuary: votive offerings from shipwreck survivors. The fifteenth-century *San Kerrew* is believed to have lived in a cave by the sanctuary and what purport to be his remains are preserved in the underlying crypt, still venerated as a miracle maker.

Bishop Cagliares changed the dedication from the Assumption to the Immaculate Conception, donating a new titular painting by Federico Barocci in 1615. When Bishop Cocco Palmieri decided to create a separate parish in the eastern part of Gozo in 1688, *Santa Marija tal-Qala* was – quite naturally - chosen as parish church (commemorated with a 1988 handstamp). Qala acquired parish status in its own right in 1872; however, because it was deemed to be too small and since it is away from the village core, the Sanctuary was later replaced by the present parish church.

Qala's name could mean 'port', probably because of nearby Mgarr or of *Hondoq ir-Rummien* bay. Although other etymologies have been proposed, the harbour theme is reflected in the village's coat of arms – with its *In Tempestate Perfugium* (Haven from Storms) motto. Qala is well known for its hard coralline type of stone, used locally (for monuments and breakwaters) and abroad (famously Liverpool's Christ the King Cathedral).



*Hondoq ir-Rummien Bay*

(cont on page 24)

*stamp terms used in PHILATELY* (22)

(Emanuel Vella)

***Mafeking:*** Town in Bechuanaland, South Africa, which was besieged in 1900 during the Boer War, and which issued its own stamps by authority of Major-General Baden-Powell. There were two types: the “Baden-Powell portrait” and the “Good year cycle”. They were unique as they were printed on ferro-prussiate plan-copying paper and were thus in the typically blue colour of architects and engineers plans.

***Mafia:*** Small island on the East African coast on the mouth of the Rufiji River, south of Zanzibar. Formerly part of German East Africa. It was occupied by British Forces in December 1941. In the early stages of the occupation captured stocks of German East African postage and revenue stamps were overprinted “Mafia” or “G.R.I. - Mafia” and used for postage. Later, stocks of I.E.F. stamps were introduced with a similar overprint and these were used until the island was incorporated into the new mandated territory of Tanganyika. Area:200 sq m, population in 1914 about 40,000.

***Magdalena:*** Province of Colombia. Typeset provisionals for the town of Rio Hacha was issued in 1901. Each stamp bore the autographed initials of the authorising agent.

***Magic Letter Express:*** A Richmond Virginia, USA Local mail service organised in 1865 by Evans Porter & Co which used a typeset stamp.

**Magnifier:** A reasonably good magnifying glass is an essential adjunct to the serious collector's outfit. It enables the critical examination of the fine detail of a design, or the quality of a specimen. The intricate detail and beauty of some of the designs thus brought to light are one of the pleasures of the hobby. Magnifiers are obtainable ranging from cheap all plastic models to the electrically lit super-magnifiers.

**Magayar:** Stamps of Hungary. Magyarország, Magyar (Kir) Posta, are all stamps of Hungary which usually have this name.

**Mailcoach:** Horse drawn coaches were being used for the transport of mail by the Thurn and Taxis post in Europe by the middle of the seventeenth century. In England they were not introduced until 1784, the first run being between London and Bristol. Before this time the mail was carried by dilatory post boys on horseback; they were often accused of being in league with highwayman! Mail coaches proved to be a vast improvement, but in Britain their Leyday was brief, being soon superseded by the railways. In the remote districts mail coaches continued to operate for a number of years, even after the trunk railways had been constructed. The last one in England survived until 1874 in the north of Scotland.

**Mailometer Perforations:** USA vending machine. Large hole, perforation on coil stamps in use from 1909 to about 1918.

*(to be continued)*

## Script by Script (22)

(Antoine Vassallo)

*This regular space features stamps without any identifiable name in "latin" script or providing some similar difficulty.*

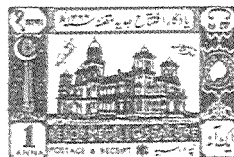
Today I present two more Indian states.

**Faridkot** (whose chief town is also so called) is now part of the Punjab, in the North. After coming under British influence in 1809, it issued its first stamps in 1879 (including the unusual "folus" currency). These were quite rough handstamped impressions on a variety of imperforate paper. In 1887 they were replaced with Indian issues overprinted with the Convention state's name.



**Hyderabad**, now divided among three other states, has a more important history. After becoming part of the Mogul empire in 1687, it was ruled since 1713 by "nizams" (beginning with Asaf Jah, Mogul emperor of the Deccan, who founded an independent kingdom). Following rivalry over succession, it came under British protection in 1789 (and actually at first refused to form part of the newly independent India in 1947!) The name – variously spelt - still exists in the walled capital (which has retained that position in Andra Pradesh, with numerous interesting buildings) and in another city (in Pakistan).

Stamps appeared from 1869 to 1950, with its name in Urdu (meaning "state of the successors of Asaf", the official title in English being Nizam's Dominions) inscribed in most designs. Although some words in Latin script are usually included, only one issue carries a clear "Hyderabad".

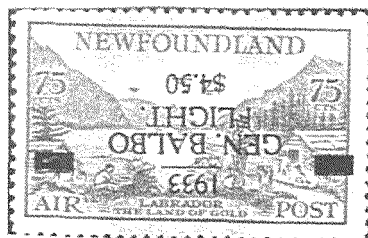


**E & O not E (17)***(Antoine Vassallo)**Glances at stamps with design or printing mistakes  
(well-known or obscure)*

In the years until it joined the Confederation of Canada in 1949, the island of **Newfoundland** became well known for the volume of pictorials it issued – and for specific “airmail” stamps. One of these special sets appeared in 1933, showing five different scenic views printed in recess by London’s Perkins Bacon Ltd.

A few weeks later (on 24<sup>th</sup> July), one of these stamps was overprinted – or, rather, overcharged - by Robinson & Co (in Saint John’s, the capital of this British Dominion) for Italo Balbo’s Transatlantic Mass Formation Flight. The Italian General Balbo was both a politician (after acting as aviation minister, he became governor of Libya) and a famous aviator. He led mass flights to South America and to North America in 1929 and 1933 respectively. Ironically he died (in 1940) when his plane was brought down.

Inverted overprinting can easily occur, should a sheet be put into the press the wrong way; and this is what happened here. When this error was discovered, an official order for destruction was made. But a few copies did survive (together with four others which, though torn up, were skilfully repaired).

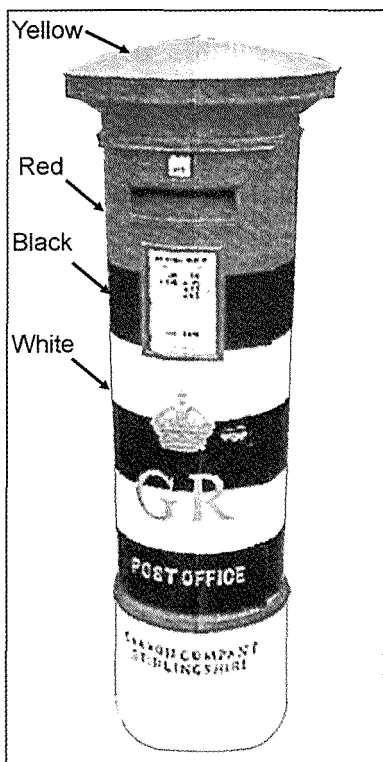


Moreover, a further mistake was also made. The intended stamp to be overprinted was the 75 cent (showing Labrador); however the 10 cent (“Land of Hearts Delight”) also so exists, possibly because the colour is quite similar. In any case, I don’t really expect to have either in my possession!

## Did You Know ?

**George Vella**

The characteristic British cast iron pillar letterboxes are still to be found in Malta and Gozo and are still in use. In Gozo three still exist, two in Victoria, at Republic Street and St. Francis Square, the other one is at Nadur on the way to San Blas. On the front these bear the emblem of the reigning British monarch of the time when it was placed at the site where it is found. Example GR for George V, GviR for George VI and ER for Elizabeth II ( the R is for Rex or monarch ). In the 1970's in Malta, for some 'national' reason, the emblem on some of these letterboxes was chiselled out. An example still can be seen at Republic Street, Valletta. Luckily this did not happen in Gozo.



As one might well know these pillar letterboxes are characteristically painted post office red with a black base. It is interesting to know that during World War II in Great Britain these letterboxes had most of the lower part painted in black and white stripes to be seen during the night during blackouts and not being of a hazard. The rest of the top part remained red and the top face was painted with a special yellow green paint which changed colour if anti-personnel gas-bomb attacks were made in cities, thus serving as an early warning.

Poisonous gases reacted with this yellow green paint to give different colours according to what gas was thrown.

**LESLIE SUTTON** a UK member from Nottingham -  
*Writes*

In March this year I was asked if I would put on a display from my Malta stamp collection to my home Philatelic Society.

I agreed to do this; and during the next six months set to work to introduce "MALTA" to my fellow members some of whom already knew the island; having visited it on holiday or served there as members of the British armed forces.

I introduced my display with a resume of Malta's location, its vital role in controlling the spread of the disease plague during the 16th and 19th centuries by isolation and fumigation of cargoes and mails.

Its strategic position in the middle of the Mediterranean made an ideal base for use as a staging post from which naval and military operations were launched during several wars, and hospitalization of wounded personnel undertaken.

My first new album leaves displayed the various watermarks impressed into the paper used for printing stamps from one of the earliest Malta stamps, the 1861 ½d brown orange (an earlier printing in 1860 being on unwatermarked paper) to present issues.

The cancellations used to ensure stamps were not re-used and to identify the office applying the cancel.

I next displayed examples of cancellations applied on stamps

at *Rabato* prior to its renaming Victoria Gozo in 1897. Then subsequent versions of the Victoria cancel on definitive issues in the following three monarchs reigns.

I also showed examples of the cancellations applied at Migiarro Gozo from 1893 to 1929.

I have always preferred to collect postally used stamps showing the name of the town or village at which it was applied.

The rest of my display was one of a comprehensive covering of all Malta issues up till 1974 which comprised of sets and singles commemorating many events such as visits by the Queen, the Pope and heads of government, the award of the George Cross to Malta, annual religious festivals, sporting competitions and many others.

A fellow member displayed his collection of the stamps of Egypt.

This was held on Friday 5th October 2007.

*You are all invited to contribute to this, **our** periodical*

Members are encouraged to send comments and suggestions, as well as other contributions for publication (about your collection and experience, about postal history and stamp subjects etc, etc). Because of our numerous foreign members, the language should preferably be English; but a summary in Maltese could be added to an item - in any case the editorial board can translate.

We also welcome letters asking for help regarding stamp identification etc. Anything published will merit a philatelic gift! And Juniors will receive a memento in any case!



## STORY OF A STAMP

*“Hello can I tell you my story”?*

Once I was lying on a table in a small printing press, when one day a young artist entered the master’s office. After a few minutes the owner of the printing press picked me up along with some other sheets and started to print the images of what the young artist had given him.

All at once I was beautiful, a sports car was printed on me. Along with the other stamps we were sent to the post office to be checked and then sold. One day an old lady came to the post office to buy a 7c stamp. It was my turn to be sold. The old lady put me in her purse. At home she got me out of her purse; opened her mouth and a large ugly tongue came out to lick me. She put me on an envelope and pressed me with her large hand. Stuck on my first envelope I was again thrown in her handbag. We went for a short walk and I was thrown in a long red metal pillar.

When I landed, there were some of my friends also stuck on to different envelopes. After a while, a hand picked us and put us in a brown bag and again went for a little ride in a van, back to the post office. “What is going to happen to us please? Can somebody tell us?” We were arranged and ready to be delivered. The post woman roped her bag to her bike and left. We arrived in a big house and the post woman picked me up and rang the bell. A small boy opened the door. The boy started to shout and I thought; was I so ugly! He opened the envelope and started to laugh and shout. It was his 7th birthday.

I felt proud. The journey was over and I was put in a drawer with other new friends.

*(Natalia Said Year 4 St Francis Primary School, Victoria Gozo).*

**POST HASTE (4)**

*continuing an irregular series about the interesting  
Story of the Post*

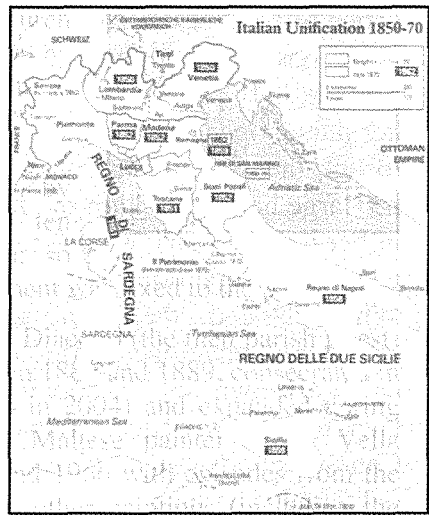
*(Antoine Vassallo)*

**Towards Italy's unification**

From medieval times, Italy became a nebulous grouping of merchant princes. Their need to communicate throughout their respective areas of control and business contacts led to the early establishment of regular messenger services - which developed into what can well be described as an international European postal service.

The extension of Venetian (to the east) and Florentine (to the north) influence saw the spread of these posts to most of Europe by the sixteenth century. Postal markings were not used but letters with charge marks do exist. In the early eighteenth century, the Italian peninsula became the battleground for its neighbours' political interests, divided into kingdoms and dukedoms. The states developed separately from a postal point of view, also since currency differences made mail interchange too complicated. This was the period when handstamps developed.

During the French Revolutionary Wars, Italy was invaded and gradually overrun. Its northern states were divided between Austria and France, with the latter creating two puppets: the Cisalpine and the Roman Republics, later replaced as the Italian Republic by Napoleon Bonaparte. This became a kingdom



within the French Empire in 1805. Thus Italy was incorporated into the French postal system, the provinces being given French style handstamps – used until the collapse of French control.

The Kingdom had taken over the Austrian-controlled parts of northern Italy but Lombardy-Venetia was established as a separate state in 1815 (administered postally as part of the Austrian Empire with normal postal markings). Following the ratification of the boundaries of the different states by the Congress of Vienna, the scene was set for the 1850s unification process. The first “Italian” adhesive stamp dates from 1851, issued by the island of Sardinia on January 1st.

*with acknowledgements to Rossiter & Flower’s Stamp Atlas*

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## **Valuable stamps**

*presented by Lina Gauci*

### **Sweden Three Skilling Banco, Yellow Colour Error, 1855**



The three skilling stamp (yellow colour error) was issued in Sweden in 1855. Due to a printing error, this stamp is printed on yellow coloured paper (meant for the eight skilling stamp of the same set) instead of the usual green colour (used for the three skilling stamp). One copy of the yellow error variety of this stamp was found in 1885 by a young Swedish boy in his grandfather’s collection.

It is one-of-a-kind rarity, as no other copies have been discovered to date.

(from page 13)

Occupying the eastern most corner of Gozo, this traditional village of a few hundred families is clearly off the beaten path: the farthest village from Gozo's capital Victoria but the closest to the rest of the Maltese archipelago. Its rocky hillsides enjoy an unobstructed – and breathtaking! – view of the islands of Malta and Comino. Except for a few sheltered inlets (such as *Hondoq ir-Rummien*), the coastline is a rocky trek to which nature and history have both contributed richly. The prettiest among several caves is probably *Ghar Minka*, which is accessible only by boat. The foremost among the mainly defensive structures designed to deter enemy landings is the mid-



St Anthony's Battery known as "*It-Trunciera*"

eighteenth century St. Anthony's Battery, known locally as *it-Trunciera*. Salt pans constitute another interesting feature: trapping seawater in hand-dug troughs is a traditional way of producing salt. Qala's salt pans are found between *Hondoq ir-Rummien* and *il-Gebla tal-Melh*. *Hondoq* also "boasts" of the disused concrete desalination plant.

Qala offers many other attractions to the hordes of tourists, including its – practically unique – windmill which is still in working order (to which can be added the surviving tower of *Ta' Sufa*). But its history goes back thousands of years. Six sites have been identified as Temple period settlements, others as Punic structures. The *Gebla l-Wieqfa* (an eleven-foot high roughly pyramidal megalithic known in Gozitan mythology as the seat of a giantess) is acknowledged as a cornerstone of a lost temple site. Ancient "cart ruts" are found in at least three locations in Qala, one of which near the surviving temple period settlement at *il-Wileg*. Another cart rut site is at *il-Wardiya* but the best is at *is-Sidra* where the ruts extend for over two hundred feet, directing the visitor towards a veritable forest of *xkattapietra* (a plant traditionally used for gallstone treatment).

To conclude with two items representing the old and the new, Qala is referred to as such in a fifteenth century navigation chart preserved at the Vatican and also hosts the Institute for Tourism Studies. I finally note that Qala has a sub-postoffice.

(Photos with acknowledgements to Qala Local Council)

## FOR SALE

- **Capitulation of the French Special hand stamp cards (set of 2).** Lm1.00c  
*E2.33*
- **A commemorative Registered Cover from Victoria Gozo Post Office to commemorate two Gozitan Patriots namely:- Sir Adrian Dingli & Arch Saverio Cassar.** Lm2.00c  
*E4.66*
- **A Commemorative Card showing Guzeppi Grech known as Zeppu Kola, the last owner of the Xaghra Windmill doing maintenance work.** Lm1.00c  
*E2.33*
- **Card to commemorate the 200th Death Anniversary of Gozitan patriot Archpriest Saverio Cassar. Limited Edition of 50.** Lm0.50c  
*E1.16*
- **Card to commemorate Holy Week Traditional Celebrations. Limited Edition of 100.** Lm0.50c  
*E1.16*
- **Special card issued to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. The card is cancelled with the special handstamp issued from Victoria Gozo Post Office. Limited Edition of 100. (very few left)** Lm0.50c  
*E1.16*
- **Registered cover commemorating the issue of Comino Tower stamp. Cancelled at Ghajnsielem sub post office with the first day of issue hand stamp Limited Edition of 75.** Lm0.75c  
*E1.75*
- **Card to commemorate the 7th Gozo Philatelic Exhibition (3 to 12 November 2006) including the 8c Christmas stamp and cancelled with the Christmas First Day of Issue hand stamp Limited Edition of 130.** Lm0.75c  
*E1.75*
- **Special card issued on the occasion of the TOY STAMP issue. Cancelled on the first day of issue at Xaghra Post Office featuring the "POMSKIZILLIOUS MUSEUM OF TOYS" found in Xaghra Gozo. Limited Edition of 75.** Lm0.75c  
*E1.75*

## FOR SALE

- Special “In Memory” card hand stamped at Gharb Sub Post Office on the occasion of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist held at Ta’ Pinu Shrine, for the repose of the soul and in memory of Mr Anthony Fenech, a great philatelist and a sincere friend of the Gozo Philatelic Society. Limited edition of 160. Lm0.75c  
E1.75
- Card in the form of First Day of Issue of the re-printed 1c stamp from the 2004 Definitive Flowers set. This stamp was first issued in Gozo on the 19th October 2006. Limited edition of 183. Lm0.25c  
E0.58
- Cover issued on the occasion of the Christmas set stamp issue (2005) with a personalized stamp of Chev. Paul Camilleri Cauchi - the stamp set designer. These covers are individually signed by the artist himself. Limited edition of 130. Lm1.00c  
E2.33
- Card to commemorate the 50 years of Europe. Cancelled with the special handstamp issued for the occasion during the festivities held at Nadur Gozo. Limited edition of 75 cards. Lm1.00c  
E2.33
- Registered Hand Coloured cover to commemorate the issue of two stamps depicting Gozo Balconies (one at Victoria and the other at Gharb). The covers were hand stamped with the First Day of issue Post-Mark. Limited edition of 75 covers. Lm1.00c  
E2.33
- Card commemorating the GPS 8th Annual Exh. 2007 and the launching of the GPS website. Lm0.50c  
E1.16
- Set of two cards with first day of operation hand-stamp of the new Post Offices at Xlendi and St Lawrence. Lm1.00c  
E2.33
- Set of two registered covers with two Gozo Scenes Stamps (Xlendi and Mgarr) on their first day of issue Lm2.00c  
E4.66
- Malta stamps in mint condition are also available at 2/3 catalogue price.

*Those interested may contact:*

Mr Anthony Grech on Tel No. 21553338

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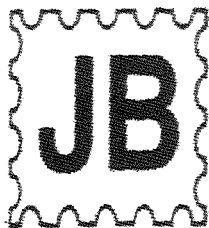
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## Front Cover:

- St Anthony's Battery - known also as "*It-Trunciera*" - built at Ras il-Qala, Gozo in 1732.
- 10d stamp from a set of four which was issued on 24th July 1971 commemorated two different anniversaries; one of which is the coronation of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.



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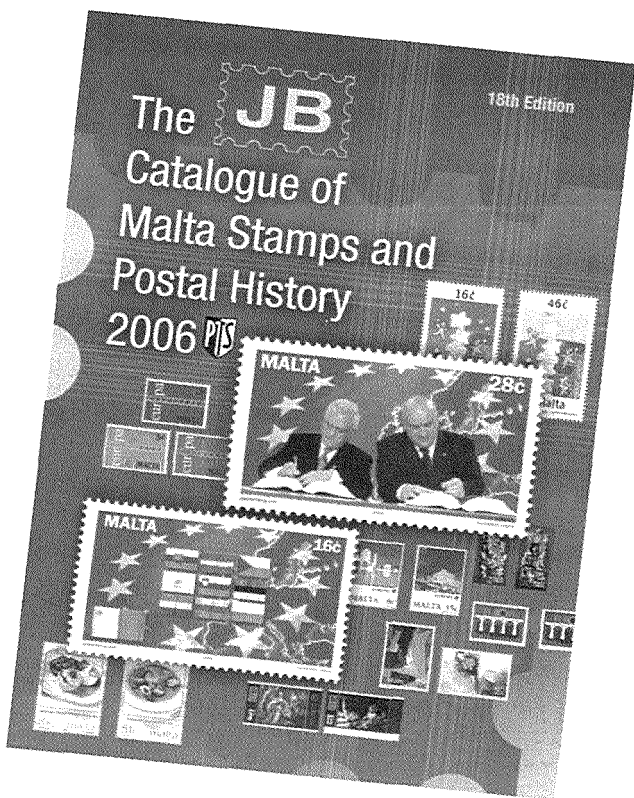
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