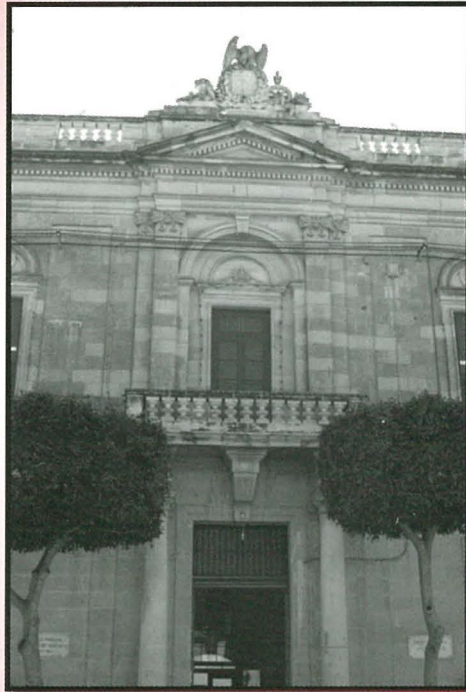




April - June 2009

No.36 - 2/2009

www.stamps-gozo.org



GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Newsletter

Members' Meetings

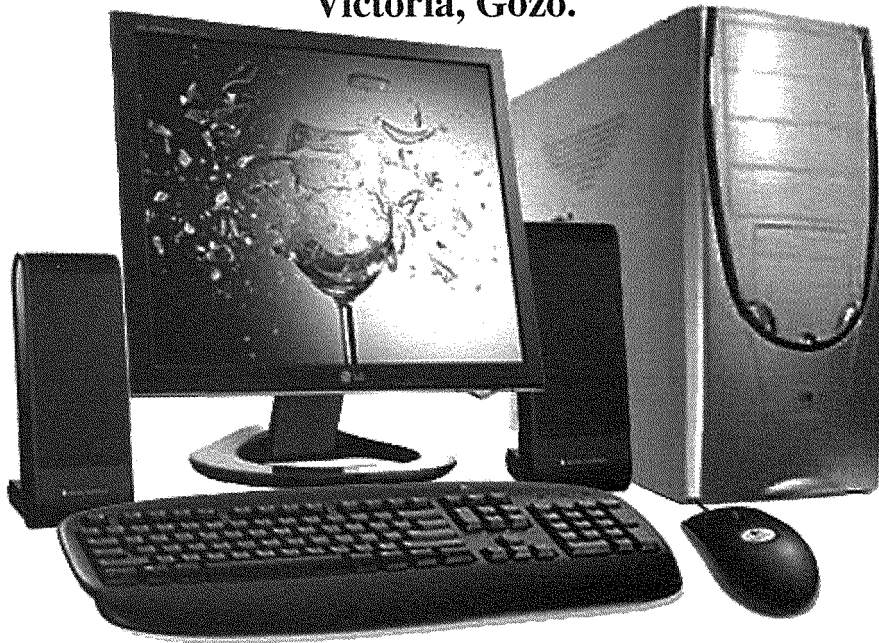
*Please note that these meetings will be stopped during
June, July and August
And will start again on the **1st Sunday** of September*

- 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 for overseas members is €12 - they can use Money Orders or new currency notes.
- Members can acquire a copy of our Statute (approved during the 5th 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

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

E-mail address _____ Tel. No. _____

I enclose €5.00 membership fee. (Overseas €12, including Newsletter)

(Fee for Junior membership, under 16 years, is €2.00.)

Date of birth _____)

.....
Signature

.....
Date

Introduced by _____ Member No. _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

I enclose €5 (Junior €2 / Overseas €12) to renew my membership.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

E-mail address _____ Tel. No. _____

Date _____ Member No. _____

GPS NEWSLETTER
Quarterly Organ
of
THE GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY

First issued on 12 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 3 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.

email address: editor@stamps.goza.org

GPS DIARY (36)

Antoine Vassallo (Secretary)

- 10 February 2009:** Exhibition booking confirmed for 7-14 November 2009.
- 22 February 2009:** Members' Meeting on last Sunday of month at Victoria Scouts HQ.
- 27 March 2009:** Committee meeting begins preparing for Exhibition and 10th anniversary commemoration.
- March 2009:** GPS is one of the signatories on a letter asking that Gozo should have its official coat of arms.
- 29 March 2009:** Last Members' Meeting on last Sunday of month: now on first Sunday.
- March 2009:** GPS is one of the signatories on a letter asking for a stamp set featuring Gozitan literary figures.
- 1 April 2009:** Anthony Grech produces set of two Cards for Don Bosco Oratory handstamp.
- 2 April 2009:** Subcommittee begins preparing for special 10th anniversary issue of the GPS Newsletter.
- 5 April 2009:** Members' Meeting on first Sunday of month at Victoria Scouts HQ.

ATTENTION

newsletter No.37 will be a special issue
on the occasion of the GPS's 10th anniversary:
if you have any photo (or other material)
which could be included,
we would like to hear from you
editor@stamps-gozo.org
or come to the Members meeting on 7 June.

When sending by post, use only cheques drawn on Maltese banks (not Money Orders) or mint Euro Malta stamps to pay your subscription or acquire items shown.

Special Handstamp Cancellations Related To, And Stamped In Gozo

Part 6

George Vella

This is a continuation of Parts 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 of special handstamp cancellations which were stamped in Gozo to commemorate special events connected with the island of Gozo. These were issued by Maltapost since 1969.

B.P.O. = Branch Post Office.

T.B.P.O. = Temporary Branch Post Office

[No.] = JB 2004 Stamp Catalogue, page 143.

HANDSTAMPS ARE TO SCALE & SCANNED FROM ORIGINALS.



31. [...] 22-6-2008
125th Anniversary of the Call of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu, at Ta' Pinu Shrine, as an extension of G'arb B.P.O., Gozo. Designed by Anthony Grech, 54x32 mm.



32. [...] 10-8-2008
1750th Anniversary Martyrdom of St. Lawrence, at St. Lawrence Parish, as an extension of G'arb B.P.O., Gozo. Designed by Anthony Grech, 36x39 mm.



33. [...] 5-10-2008
50th Anniversary of the Annunciation of St. George's Basilica, at St. George's Basilica, as an extension of Victoria B.P.O., Gozo. Designed by Anthony Grech, 36x60 mm.

POSTMARKS OF TIMES GONE BY!

(Anthony Grech)



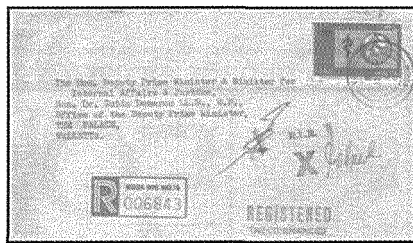
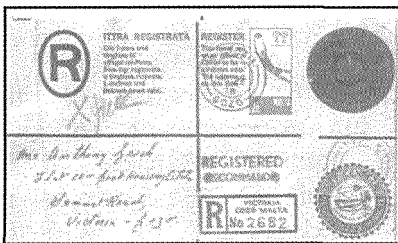
On 28 December 1977 a letter bomb killed a young girl - Karen Grech and seriously injured her brother. This letter was addressed to their father, Prof Edwin Grech. A second letter bomb was also received by another doctor, but it did not leave the desired results. Following these coward acts, the Malta Postal authorities issued new regulations concerning the posting of bulky mail. In fact to send bulky mail, the envelope or packet had to be taken personally to the post office. After examining the contents the Officer in charge of the post office seals the envelope or packet and applies a manuscript "X" sign together



with his signature. This was done usually in blue pencil and in the presence of the individual sending the mail. Mail posted not under this conditions were postmarked "NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POSTING CONDITIONS" in black ink.

Another letter bomb scare occurred in 1984 and again the special conditions were applied. This time a new handstamp was introduced. This handstamp shows a bold "X" sign and the name of the post office where it was applied. Government departments were issued with a similar postmark with the words "GOVT DEPTS" over the "X". Sometimes it was applied in Red ink but most commonly it was applied in Black. In all circumstances the officer in charge applied also his signature and sometimes more than one officer signed on the front of the envelope.

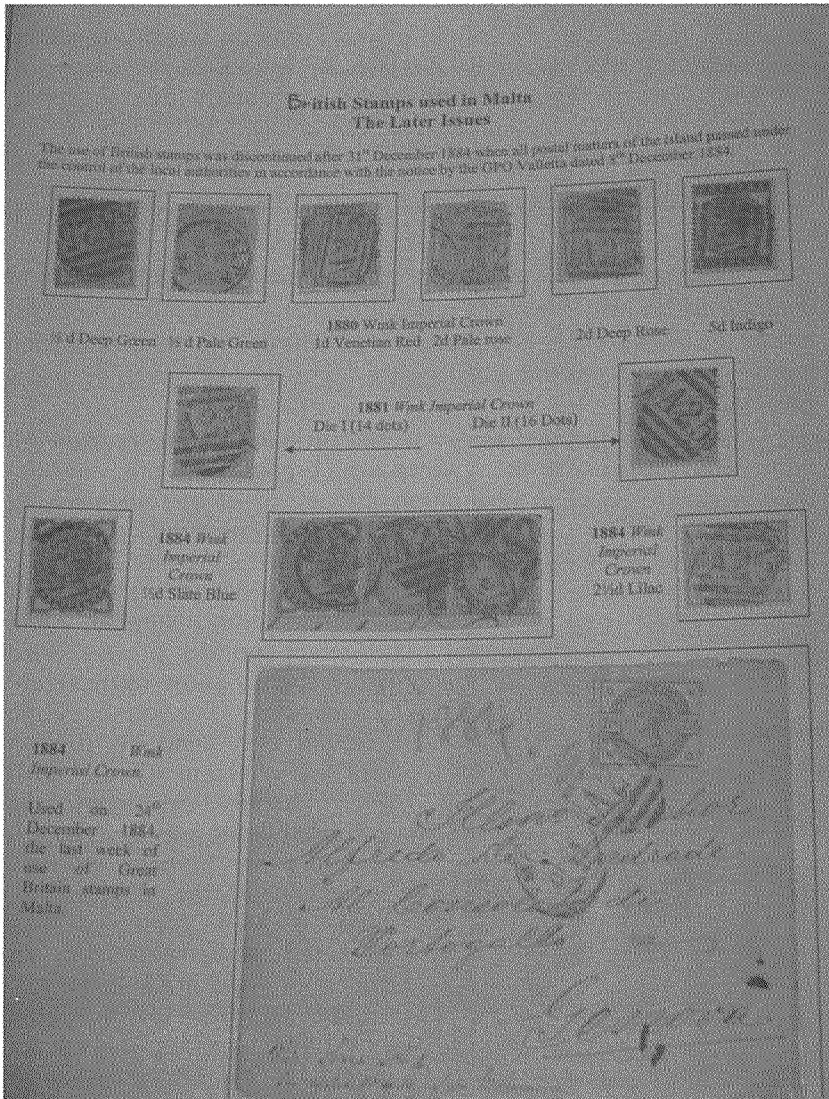
The use of this handstamp stopped being used without any notice. Well, we hope that we will never again need to use this postmark.



Manuscript 'X' and signature in blue pencil. 26/06/1978

The 'X' postmark applied in red. Envelope double signed.

Australian MALTA (14)
 series of glimpses at pages from
 the prize-winning collection built up by
 John Vassallo, GPS member in Australia



“Lawrencian” Philately

(Antoine Vassallo)

Last year, numerous countries and cities commemorated the 1750th anniversary of St Lawrence’s martyrdom; not unexpectedly, the Gozitan village of *San Lawrenz* joined them. A handstamp was issued in August (with the help of our Anthony Grech), together with cards. I was asked to prepare an introductory survey of *Filatelija Lawrenzjana*; unfortunately – probably due to space restrictions – it was included in an abbreviated form only in the special publication. Hoping it will interest our readers, I have adapted it into English.

We are seeing an increase in collectors who prefer to concentrate on just a theme, even adding stamps and other philatelic material to items such as publications, pictures or statues about the patron saint. My aim today is to offer some suggestions to devotees of St Lawrence.

Obviously the first aspect would be stamps actually showing him. I thus begin with the Vatican which commemorated in 2003 the *Cappella Niccolina* restoration through a set of four showing some of its frescoes. This had been the private oratory of Pope Nicholas V, resulting in the name, who used it as his study; he picked *Beato Angelico* to decorate it with episodes from the lives of



deacon saints Stephen and Lawrence (besides others). Two of the stamps show respectively Lawrence’s ordination by Pope Sixtus II (41c) and his trial in front of Valerian (77c). Two other scenes represent his commission to use any wealth available for the poor and how he effected this distribution. This painter (actually Fra Giovanni da Fiesole) holds an important place in the history of art: the *Poste Vaticane* honoured the fifth anniversary of his death in 1955. This set consisted of



two stamps (50 and 100 lire) reproducing the first fresco. Italy did the same, using a different scene showing this distribution. To go a little further away, St Lawrence can also be easily identified in this Spanish fresco (by Francisco Goya) from the Saragossa sanctuary of Our Lady of Pilar as reproduced in a 1940 charity set.

St Lawrence has long been a popular saint: this devotion resulted in numerous churches being



dedicated to him. One of them appears on stamps issued by the *Repubblica Sociale Italiana* (the regime which controlled northern Italy towards the end of World War II). Out of fourteen different designs covering destroyed buildings, two with a

face value of 25 lire showed *San Lorenzo fuori le Mura* – with remaining stocks being overprinted by the new government a few months later. This patriarchal basilica (with Constantinian origins) hosting his tomb was struck by the Allies who were trying to destroy the nearby railway. Fortunately it was reconstructed by 1948, with a surprisingly limited reduction in its historico-artistic value.



The republic of San Marino gave us another church dedicated to St Lawrence: in a 2000 set of five showing the importance of

churches in the artistic development of the Montefeltro region. This old building in the central square of the village of Talamello is mostly famous for its front portal and for the crucifix (school of Giotto). This municipality near Pesaro regularly organizes festivities in honour of the saint, most notably during the *notte magica di san Lorenzo* near his 10 August feastday.



Spain too boasts of a famous St Lawrence sanctuary: in the city of *El Escorial* not too far from the capital. *San Lorenzo* is a royal mausoleum and palace, monastery and basilica included in the UNESCO list of heritage sites to be protected. King Felipe II began



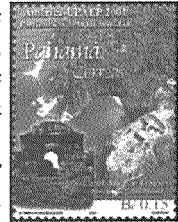
building it – in the form of a gridiron and with a strong influence on later architectural styles – as thanksgiving for winning a decisive battle, exactly on the 10 August 1557. The Spanish posts have been very liberal in reproducing various aspects from it, a 1961 set of six being typical. The Escorial was also included in a 1989 sheet showing four royal sites.

Lawrencian philately can also include the numerous non-religious places named after him. I can begin with the Canadian river, included in a 1908 set for Quebec's third centenary;

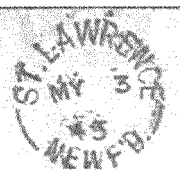
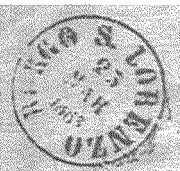


I note further that Canada and the United States had a joint issue in 1984 for the 450th anniversary of Cartier's exploration. The St Lawrence Seaway is a North American canal system of immense

commercial value: both Canada and the US commemorated its 1959 inauguration. Among other locations, I limit myself to *Castillo de San Lorenzo* (Panama): part of the UNESCO-listed fortifications on the Caribbean coast.



A further section in a collection specializing on the St Lawrence theme could be postmarks from towns named after him. Obvious examples are San Lorenzo in Argentina and Paraguay (and Italy) and Saint-Laurent (Canada and France). I offer these early cancellations: one from the beginning of the kingdom of Italy ("*Borgo S Lorenzo*") and another from the island of Newfoundland (long part of Canada).



Finally, many persons named Lawrence (or similar) have been commemorated philatelically. St Lawrence Ruiz is of course a Filipino martyr whose liturgical day is 28 September. But I want to concentrate on four non-canonized personalities.



Ernest Lawrence is described as 1939 Physics Nobel Prize winner on this Guinean stamp and then shown more correctly by Saint Vincent. Italy commemorated Lorenzo de Medici, known as *il Magnifico*, on the fifth centenary



from his birth in 1449 (also overprinted for Trieste) and from his death in 1992. I also show a set of eight issued by Sierra Leone just after actor Lawrence Olivier's death. I conclude this brief introduction with a USA 2001 Christmas stamp showing a painting by sixteenth century artist Lorenzo Costa.



Where in the World ?! (27)

(Antoine Vassallo)

Stamp Issuers Past and Present

- Italian Occupation of Albania 1939-44.**
- Italian Occupation of Castelrosso 1922-32.**
- Italian Occupation of Cephalonia & Ithaca 1941.**
- Italian Occupation of Corfu 1923.**
- Italian Occupation of Corfu & Paxos 1941.**
- Italian Occupation of Dodecanese Islands.**
- Italian Occupation of Fiume & Kupa 1941-2.**
- Italian Occupation of the Ionian Islands 1941-3.**
- Italian Occupation of Montenegro 1941-3.**
- Italian Occupation of Saseno (Sazan in Albania) 1923.**
- Italian Occupation of Slovenia 1941.**
- Italian Occupation of Trentino 1918.**
- Italian Occupation of Trieste 1918-9.**
- Italian Post offices in Albania (*Albania, Durazzo, Scutari* and *Valona* and - now Greek - *Janina*) 1902-16.**
- Italian Post Offices in China (*Pechino* and *Tientsin*) 1918.**
- Italian Post Offices in Crete (*La Canea*) 1900-11.**
- Italian Post Offices in Libya *Bengasi* 1901 and *Tripoli di Barberia* 1910.**
- Italian Post Offices in the Levant (Turkish Empire) 1874-1908; also for Istanbul, Jersusalem, Thessaloniki and Izmir.**
- Italian Social Republic stamps (*Repubblica Sociale Italiana*) for the German-occupied parts of Italy 1944-5.**

Italian Somaliland (*Somalia*) 1903-36.

ITALY: Southern European country with stamps from 1862; previously separate states; Austro-Hungarian occupation.

Ithaca see Cefalonia.

IVORY COAST (*cote d'Ivoire*): Republic, formerly part of French West Africa, with stamps from 1959; previous separate issues 1892-1944. (beginning as *Cote d'Or*)

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

Jaffa: Russian POs 1909-10.

Jaipur: Indian state with separate issues 1904-48.

JAMAICA: Caribbean island with stamps from 1860, when still a British colony.

Jammu & Kashmir: Indian state with separate issues 1866-94.

Janina: Italian Post Office stamps in 1915 when part of Albania; now Greek Ioannina.

(to be continued)

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

Anton F Attard

THE GOZO PUBLIC LIBRARY



The 1c stamp of a set of four stamps - featuring Old Maps of Malta - issued on the 19 January 2005, features Quintinus' Map, the first printed map of the Maltese Islands. It is printed in a very rare book entitled *Insulae Melitae Descriptio*, written by Abbe' Jean Quintin (1500-1561) and published at Lyons in 1536 by Sebastian Graphics, a unique publication of which the only Government owned copy is found at the Gozo Public Library.

When in 1948 the first Labour Government decided to amalgamate the Gozo Public Library with the Royal Malta Library, not all Gozitans liked the idea. In fact on 16 August 1948 our Library ceased to be autonomous and was placed under the direction of the Librarian in Malta. To express his grief and resentment, on 5 December 1948, Mr Luigi Cutajar, ex-Librarian, availing himself of space on the only Gozitan newspaper *Għawdex*, wrote the following words of praise which are being reproduced here in translation:

“Our Library is the jewel of the whole of Gozo. It is entirely the work of Gozitans. It was started by our forefathers, thanks to their wisdom and foresight, and it was continued by us with our own efforts, from father to son.”

The origin of the Gozo Library goes back to 1839 and to a private institution, called the *Cabinetto di Lettura* which was housed in private premises in *Strada Nuova*, now G.P.F. Agius de Soldanis Street, in Victoria. The Gozo *Cabinetto di Lettura* held its first committee meeting on 7 March 1839. The president of the committee was Lieut. Col. Bayley, then inspector of police and chief civil officer in Gozo. The committee members for 1839 were Magistrate Giovanni Battista Schembri, Magistrate Carlo Carbone, Canon Saverio Mizzi, Giorgio Nicolo' Galea, Vincenzo Lapira and Dr. Fortunato Mizzi. The Treasurer was Dr. Giuseppe Xuereb and the Secretary was Dr Felice Mercieca. Soon after the *Cabinetto di Lettura* was renamed *Libreria di Societa'*.

The first general meeting of this private library took place on 23 March 1839 at the Rabat Police Station then housed in a two-storey building at *It-Tokk* where the Labour Party Club now is. One of the items of the agenda was to approve a list of new acquisitions.

Heading the list under *romanzi* (novels) was Sir Walter Scot's *Ivanhoe* followed by another four of his novels, twenty one volumes in all, evidently in an Italian translation. The whole list to be approved totaled 263 volumes appearing under history, *belles-lettres*, philosophy, law and medicine, religion and reference - quite a very good number for a private library of 38 members. Members turn in turn to act as librarians.

The library's sole source of income was the monthly fee of 1s 8d (€0.19) paid by the 38 borrowers. On 1 June 1839, the fee for clerics was reduced to 1s. (€0.12)

An extraordinary general meeting held 12 days later, on 13 June 1839, unanimously approved the move of the Library to new premises at *It-Tokk*, Rabat's *Piazza* or Main Square.

In 1852 there was a motion in the Council of Government to send spare duplicates in the Malta Public Library to Gozo to form a nucleus of a public library. This measure was derided by some newspapers but applauded by others. In that year the first catalogue was compiled and on 30 July, the first committee of management was formed. The Committee was made up of Dr Benedetto Bardon, Dr. Luigi Bondi', Lieut. Col. Charles Andrews Bayley, CMG (President) and the Rev. Dr. Michele Francesco Buttigieg, Archpriest of the *Matrice*.

On 4 October 1853 the Rev. Dr. M.F. Buttigieg, as President of the Gozo Public Library (as Lieut. Col. Bayley had died on 12 August), submitted for the Government's approval draft library regulations and a set of rules for the circulation of books. These were duly approved, with only minor alterations, by the Governor Sir William Reid on 16 November 1853. The Library was officially



opened on 21 November 1853. In the meantime, following the death of Lieut. Col. Bayley, lawyer Dr. Antonio Garroni was appointed as a new member, while Canon Michaelangelo, the other Garroni, became the first Librarian.

The Library which was opened on 21.11.1853

(continued to page 22)

stamp terms used in PHILATELY (27)

(Emanuel Vella)

Mezzo: Italian half.

Michel: Leading German language catalogue published in Munich Germany.

Middle East Forces: Stamps of G.B. were o/p "M.E.F." in 1942-3 for the use of British Forces stationed in Eretrea (1942), Italian Somaliland (1942), Cyrenaica (1943), Tripolitania (1943), all in North Africa. Also in Dodecanese in 1945.

Militarpost Eilmarke: German Armed Forces, Express Newspapers, Journal stamps of Bosnia. Also found surcharged in Italian currency for the Austrian occupation of Italy 1918.

Millbury: Town of Massachusetts, U.S.A., where one of the rarest "Postmasters" provisionals was issued in 1846.

Millimetres or Millimeter: One thousandth of a meter. Twenty millimetres have been adopted as the international standard of measurement to gauge stamp perforation, i.e. the number of perfs to 20 mm being quoted as the perf number. All over measurement of a stamp, the height length and spacing of o/p and all other vital philatelic measurements are usually given in millimetre (mm).

Mills' Free Despatch Post: A New York U.S.A. local of 1847 issued by Gustavas A. Mills.

Miniature Sheet: A sheet of stamps much smaller than the normal sheet size: sometimes containing only one stamp. Many are designed as souvenir sheets. Miniature sheets are widely collected and some are very attractive.

Minkus: One of the leading general catalogues published in the U.S. Its full title is New-Worldwide Postage Stamps Catalog. It is produced annually by Minkus publications Inc. of New York. The same firm also published a specialized catalogue of the United States and United Nations.

Minor Varieties: As the name implies, slight variations from the normal stamp. This is of interest to specialist, but not usually of sufficient importance to be listed in general catalogues.

Mint: A stamp as issued by the post office. It must be in pristine condition, unused, unfaded, undamaged and with original gum.

Mission Mixture: Unsorted accumulation of stamps, usually with much duplication sold as received from the country of origin. This is so called because Missionary organizations collect large quantities of common used stamps and sell them to dealers as a means of raising funds. They are usually sold by weight.

Missionaries: This is the name usually applied to the early typeset issues of Hawaii. They are so called from the fact that most surviving copies were used on letters sent home by missionaries on the islands.

(to be continued)

Script by Script (27)

(Antoine Vassallo)

This regular space features stamps without any identifiable name in "latin" script or providing some similar difficulty; however it is now connected with our

IDENTIFY THE ISSUER

Competition

In the last issue, you were invited to go through your catalogue to identify the Mediterranean islands which used these stamps for the few years between 1859 and 1864. The hints were:

- they now form part of a European "classical" country – that referred to Greece.
- you should be able to recognize this Queen – that was Queen Victoria.
- alphabetically, we remain quite near – that issue's "s"
- "Script by Script" featured the Indian state of Jind.
- listed in one of our regular series – "Where in the World".



Yes – the correct answer was **Ionian Islands**.

Following British occupation, this archipelago was placed under the protection of Great Britain by the 1815 Treaty of Paris. The "United States of the Ionian Islands" were given local self-government, including responsibility for the postal services. "Crowned-circle" handstamps were supplied for Cephalonia, Corfu and Zante in 1844, probably for use on prepaid mail to foreign destinations. At least one British stamp is known handstamped in Corfu.

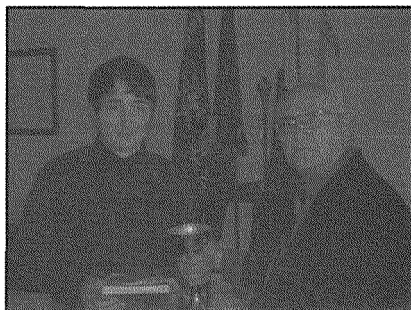
The competition design was issued as a set of three on 15th June 1859, imperforate recess-printed by Perkins, Bacon & Co. There was no indication of value but the three colours

was watermarked “1” and the 1d “2”- the other was unwatermarked. These stamps became obsolete when the islands were ceded to Greece on 30 May 1864.

Called Heptanesus in ancient times, these islands have had a chequered history: part of the Roman and Byzantine empires and occupied by the Venetians, French, Turks and Russians. They now form a Greek administrative region: Corfu, Paxos, Levkas, Ithaca, Cephalonia and Zakynthos off the western coast and Kithira off the Peloponnese southern coast.

Again free stamps are offered to all participants.

Your task is probably simpler this time:
just identify the part
of what stamp collectors call “Great Britain”
these two stamps refer to.



The winners of the GPS Exhibition held last November

BEGINNERS section

The Hobby of Stamp Collecting

(Anton V Said)

More suggestions for thematic collections

Quite often the choice for a subject in a thematic collection is related to your way of life as this is quite often more personal than any other kind. If botany is your hobby or profession then a botanical theme will appeal to you and so on. If you are interested in architecture you can choose this subject for your collection, taking styles and systems of building in different countries ranging from the igloo to the sky scraper.



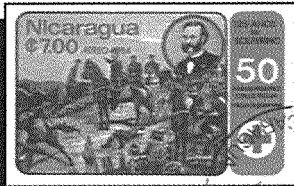
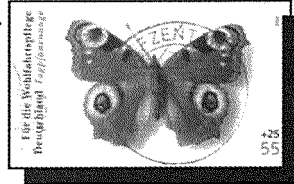
Other suggestions: "Men who have changed the world". This needs thought and very careful "pruning". From South America for instance, you would want portraits of such men as Simon Bolivar who freed much of the continent from Spanish rule - but you wouldn't want every President who ever held office in every republic.

"Exploration" Special stamps issued for the use of polar expeditions; stamps commemorating great explorers and the opening-up of new territories.

"Wild Life". Animals, birds and



insects, flowers and plants abound on stamps, and this theme makes a larger collection than you might imagine. One way of tackling it would be by continents; trying to show a natural history of each.



“The First and Second World Wars”. Many countries printed special stamps which told something of their part in each war, or their occupation by enemy forces. The wars led to the issuing of many special emergency sets to overcome shortages or replace higher quality stamps. Britain, for instance, produced polar stamps to save ink.



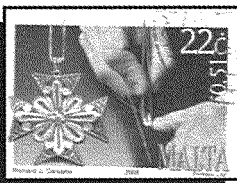
“Music and the Arts”. Many great artists, writers and musicians are commemorated on stamps and often portions of their work are reproduced.

“Stamps and good causes”. Many countries have issued stamps surcharged or specially printed for sale at a price above their postal value - the proceeds going to



charities such as the “Red Cross, Winter Relief funds, Hospitals and Medical research.

“People at Work and Play”. This subject brings in a tremendous new range of activities - for many countries have shown their inhabitants at work, welding, tapping rubber trees, building, painting, digging, ploughing, planting and harvesting. This theme as the “sports section” is very vast and of course will



continue to grow as well thus occupying you for a life time.

Other topics to take, may be religious ones, say, Christmas, Saints etc. Other complicated ones, for adults require greater research but would provide a lifetime's

interesting work such as:



- i) Postal history,
- ii) The growth and speeding up of international communications,
- iii) How one hundred years has changed the map of Europe,
- iv) Inventions - Old and New.

These are only a few topics about which one can think before starting this hobby. We are sure you can think about a great number of others. The greater the number you have to choose from, the easier the possibility it would be to find one which you can feel certain is almost exclusively your own.



One of the advantages in taking up a thematic collection is, that you yourself can decide about the size of your collection.

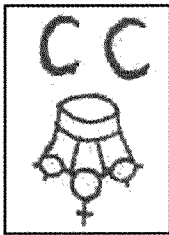
Reference "Instructions to young stamp collectors" by Robert Bateman.

Please note that Members' Meetings will be stopped during the months of June, July and August. Will start again on the **1st Sunday** of September.

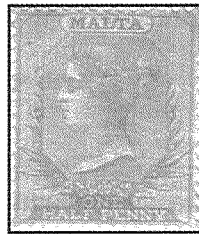
MALTA WATERMARK VARIETY

(Lina Gauci)

A number of shades of the Malta 1863, ½d “yellow” are already listed with the watermark inverted, but only those with perforate 14 all round have been listed. The perforated 14x12½ were not currently listed in this form up to 2006. This perf. 14x12½ yellow with watermark Crown CC inverted was to be listed as SG 17w.



Inverted Watermark

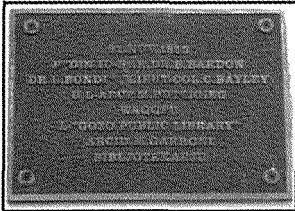


½d yellow

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 could be added to an item in Maltese - 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!



Plaque commemorating the opening of the first library on 21.11.1853

(from page 12)

Colonel Sir William Reid can be regarded as a founding father of the Gozo Public Library. He presented to the Gozo Library several newly published books as testified in the first catalogue. Presentations were also made by a number of library enthusiasts.

As already mentioned Canon Garroni was the first Librarian of the Gozo Public Library but he did not receive any salary. In the early years the only salaried member of the staff was the porter who received only £12 per annum. He was also designated 'cleaner of books'. This employee was Giuseppe Cassar who occupied the post as from 1 January 1854. That same month Sir William Reid authorized an annual grant of £50 for the purchase of books.

The estimates for 1859 published in the Government Gazette of June 1 show an expenditure of £6 for the lease of 'a house in Gozo for the use as a public library'. Premises at No. 46 Library Street, Victoria, thereafter housed the Gozo Public Library through its formative years. In 1860 the Library put up the portraits of Governors Reid and Le Merchant and those of Sir Adrian Dingli and his father. They now adorn the reading hall at Vajringa Street.

Mgr. Joseph Farrugia known as *Tal-Vers* succeeded Canon Garroni as Librarian in 1884. The number of books in the Gozo Public Library at the close of 1892 amounted to 3,999 in 7,195 volumes.



Façade of the existing Library in Vajringa Street.

In 1896, the Library moved to its present premises on the top floor of the Government Primary School in Vajringa Street. The large spacious hall, specially built to accommodate the Library's growing collections, was designed by Mgr Farrugia himself. The new location was opened on 9 March

1896. However, it had been blessed (at the same ceremony as the blessing of the school building) by the bishop of Gozo, Mgr Giovanni Maria Camilleri, on 3 November 1893.

Mgr. Farrugia was succeeded as librarian by Canon Joseph Psaila Cumbo of Sliema on 1 May 1915.

In 1921 the Legal Procurator Luigi Cutajar was the first non-cleric to be appointed librarian of the Gozo Public Library.

Four years later, in 1925, the two Public Libraries of Malta and Gozo were granted their legal deposit status.

Cutajar's successor as Librarian was a second Mgr Giuseppe Farrugia (popularly known as *Gioioso*). He was the last official to be styled 'Librarian' for, as we have already pointed out, in 1948 the Gozo Public Library ceased to be autonomous. To recompense for its amalgamation with the Royal Malta Library duplicate past newspapers were transferred to the Gozo Library. Moreover, the acquisitions for the first six months of 1949 ran to almost four pages of the *Malta Government Gazette* of 30 September.

The post of head of the Gozo Public Library, redesignated as Junior Assistant Librarian, was first held, between 1948 and 1951, by Mr. Edgar M. Grech from Malta. Mr Grech was succeeded by Mr. Paul M. Cassar, who was head of the Gozo Library from 26 May 1952 to 8 February 1994. During his headship, additional rooms were built and annexed, and on his recommendation a bindery was set up within the building.

In 1972 the Gozo Public Library adopted the Brown System of registering book loans. Mr Cassar also introduced in Gozo an inter-library loan service. In 1952, the priceless archives of the *Universitas* of Gozo were transferred to the Gozo Public Library, now housed in the newly established Gozo National Archives.

In 1982, the Gozo Public Library ceased to be a lending library, and new Lending Library premises were inaugurated on 10 February 1983 in St. Francis Square. In addition to this lending library there are also 10 branch libraries in the villages and one at the Gozo General Hospital.

The Gozo Section of the National Archives (already referred to above) was inaugurated in 1989.

Mr George V. Borg succeeded Paul M. Cassar on 24 February 1994. He has ably continued to extend the Library's service and build up its collections. He also introduced School

Children's visits, an audio-visual library and storytelling for the younger generation.

It would be most appropriate to end this write up with the same paragraph Major A.E. Abela has concluded his own article:

“The Gozo Public Library is an efficient and well-run organization which, unfailingly, affords a warm welcome and a willing, guiding hand to students and researchers – and indeed all members of the general public.”



LIBRARIANS

Michelangelo Garroni	1853 – 1884
Giuseppe Farrugia	1884 – 1915
Joseph Psaila Cumbo	1915 – 1921
Luigi Cutajar	1921 – 1931
Giusepp Farrugia (<i>Gioioso</i>)	1931 – 1948
Edgar M. Grech (<i>Officer in Charge</i>)	1949 – 1951
Paul M. Cassar (<i>Officer in Charge</i>)	1952 – 1994
George V. Borg (<i>Officer in Charge</i>)	1994 –

REFERENCE: This article is mainly based on “The Gozo Public Library” by Major A. E. Abela to be found in his publication *A Nation's Praise. Malta: People, Places and Events. Historical Sketches*, pp. 83-100.

Major Abela's article is also being suggested for further reading.

Photos: Ms Marligia Sultana.

FOR SALE

- Capitulation of the French Special hand stamp cards (set of 2). Limited Edition of 500 cards. €2.50
- A commemorative Registered Cover from Victoria Gozo Post Office to commemorate two Gozitan Patriots namely:-Sir Adrian Dingli & Arch Saverio Cassar. Limited Edition of 100 covers. (**Less than 10 left**). €4.50
- A Commemorative Card showing Guzeppi Grech known as Zeppu Kola, the last owner of the Xaghra Windmill doing maintenance work. Limited edition of 200 cards. €2.50
- 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 100 cards. (**Less than 10 left**). €1.50
- 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 cards. €1.75
- 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 cards. €1.75
- Card in the form of a First Day Cover on the issue of the reprinted 1c stamp depicting the *Sempreviva* of Gozo. This stamp was officially issued in Gozo later than in Malta. (19.10.2006). Limited edition of 160 cards. €0.50
- Registered cover commemorating the issue of the Comino Tower stamp. Postmarked with the First day of issue handstamp from Ghajnsielem S.P.O. Limited edition of 75 covers. (**Less than 10 left**). €2.50



FOR SALE

- Cover issued on the occasion of the 2005 Christmas set stamp issue 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 covers. €2.50
- 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. €2.50
- 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. €2.50
- Card commemorating the GPS 8th Annual Exh. 2007 and the launching of the GPS website. Limited edition of 100 cards. €1.50
- Set of two cards with first day of operation hand-stamp of the new Post Offices at Xlendi and St Lawrence. Limited edition of 75 cards each. €2.50
- Card commemorating the 125 Anniv from the Call of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu to Karmni Grima and Frangisk Portelli. Each card is cancelled with a special handstamp issued by Maltapost and stamped at the National shrine on Sunday 22 June 2008. The card has an embossed metal image of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu. Limited edition of 1000. **(Only 10 left)**. €3.00
- Card commemorating 5th Gozo Philatelic Exhibition and 5th Anniversary of the GPS. Limited edition of 400 cards. **(Less than 10 left)**. €1.50
- Set of 2 registered covers commemorating Karolina Cauchi and Patri Manwel Magri (Gozo Benefactors). Limited edition of 30 covers. **(Less than 5 left)**. €5.00
- Card commemorating the 9th GPC Exhibition. Limited edition of 100 cards. **(Less than 10 left)**. €1.50
- Card commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Gozo Tourism Association. Limited edition of 75 cards. €2.00

NB: Each Card or Cover is individually numbered.

- 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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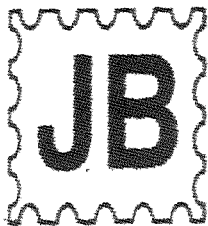
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Front Cover:

- Facade of the Gozo Library at Vajringa Street Victoria.
- 01c stamp depicting Quintinus' Map. This stamp is part from a set of four stamps featuring Old Maps of Malta issued on the 19 January 2005.



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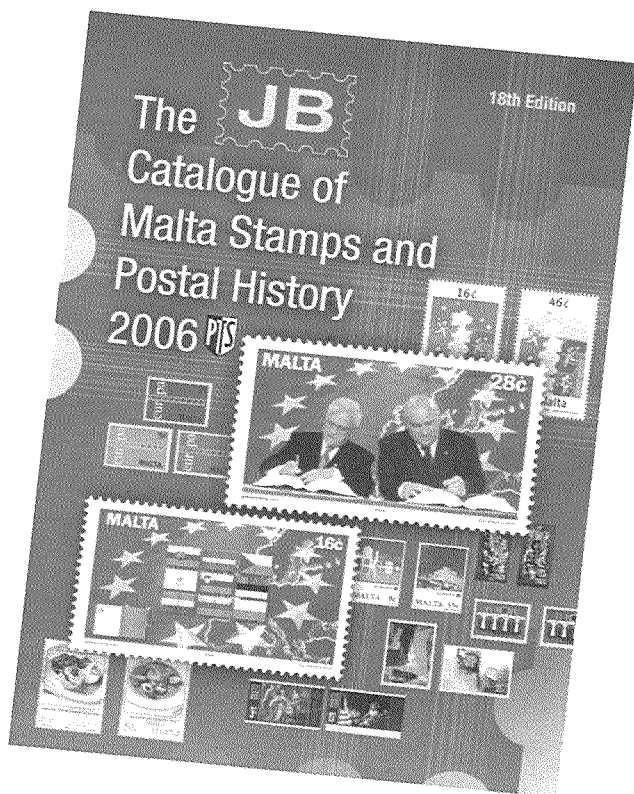
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