



April - June 2010

No.40 - 2/2010

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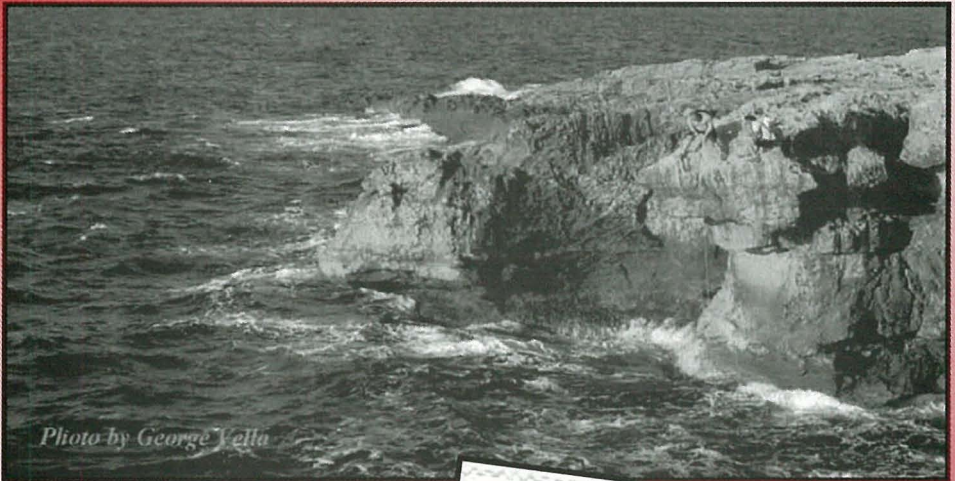


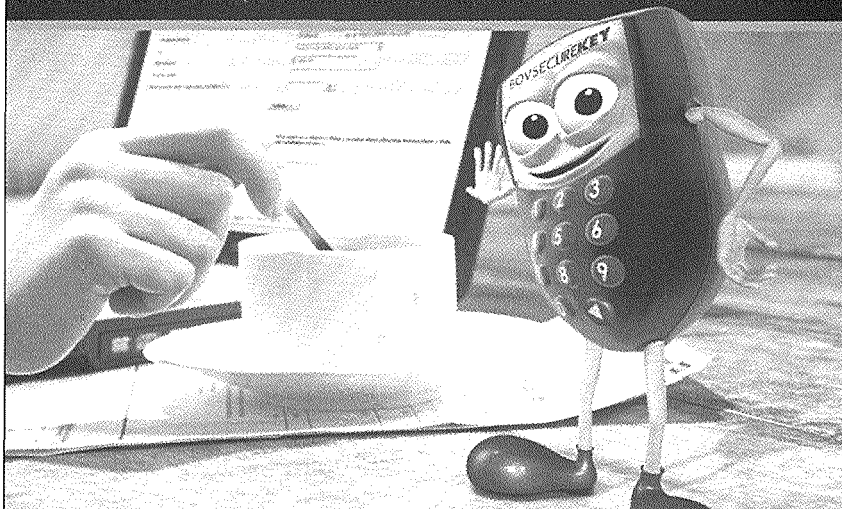
Photo by George Vella



**GOZO
PHILATELIC
SOCIETY**

Newsletter

BOV Internet Banking



ħallas il-kontijiet mid-dar jew mix-xogħol

- ħ ittrasferixxi flus minn kont għal iehor
- ħ ħallas il-kont tal-kredit kards
- ħ ara l-bilanċi 24 siegħa kuljum
- ħ ara l-kopji taċ-ċekkijiet imsarrfa
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Malta Post Bank of Valletta plc 58, The Corniche, Valletta VLT 1230, Malta

BOV

Bank of Valletta

Impenn ta' is-Success tiegħek

Front Cover:

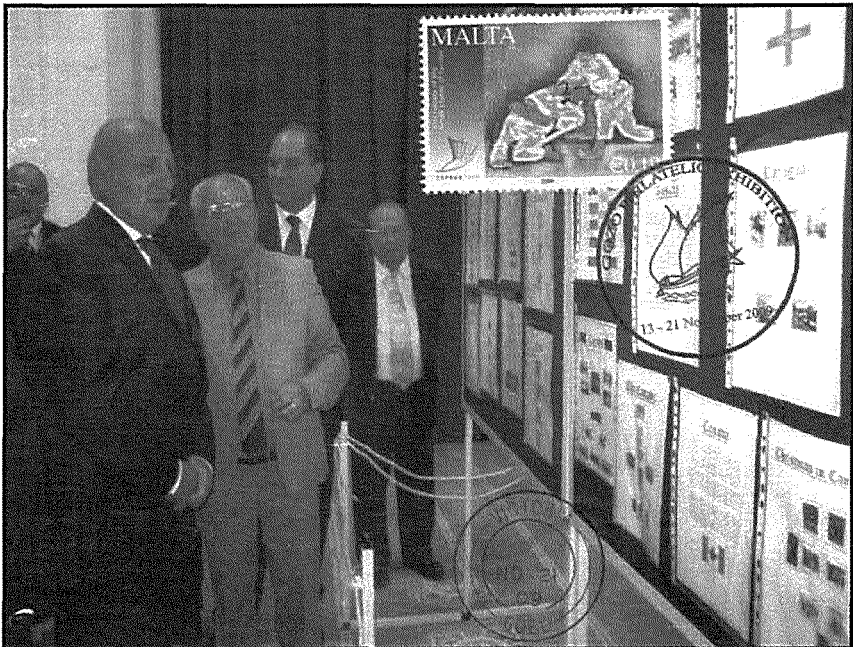
- Part of the coastline within the Marsalforn area.
- £0.02c stamp depicting part of Marsalforn coastline. This stamp was included in a Scenery set issued on September 16, 2009.

2010 PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

This year's annual philatelic exhibition is envisaged to take place between the second and third week of November, i.e. November 13 to 21, 2010.

The title chosen for this year's event is "People and Peoples". This occasion has become quite popular both with local philatelists and quite amazingly also with foreign ones.

We greatly appreciated Maltapost plc participating in last year's exhibition which though it was its first involvement in this event, we sincerely hope that it would not be the last. So we are eagerly looking forward to see them again taking part this year.



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 February 12, 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 September 3, 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.

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GPS DIARY (39)

Antoine Vassallo (Secretary)

March 7, 2010: First-Sunday- of-the month Members' Meeting at Victoria Scouts HQ.

March 17, 2010: Anthony Grech prepares cover for Blue Lagoon (Comino) "Occasion" stamp.

April 4, 2010: First-Sunday- of-the month Members' Meeting at Victoria Scouts HQ.

April 18, 2010: Anthony Grech prepares cover on occasion of award by Pope Benedict of Golden Rose to Our Lady of Ta' Pinu Shrine.

April 28, 2010: Committee meeting finalizes *Lejlet Lapsi* participation and discusses Newsletter.

May 2, 2010: Final monthly Members' Meeting at Victoria Scouts HQ: returns on 5th September after summer break.

May 14, 2010: Exhibit set up at Natural History Museum for *Lejlet Lapsi*; proved so popular that participation extended at their request.

June 4, 2010: Committee meeting decides on November Exhibition theme: "People & Peoples". Application forms and Regulations will be included in issue 41.

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Malta eV have again featured GPS in their periodical: *Il-Maltija*: number 14 refers to our Cards.

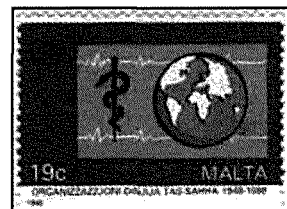
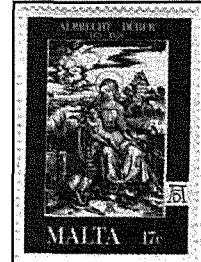
Non-Avian Fauna on Malta's Stamps (1899-2007)

(Antoine Vassallo)

chronological list (* = not the main subject of design)

(cont from Newsletter No 35)

- 1977 Christmas 1c sheep*
11c sheep*
- 1978 Tapestries 2c donkey*
11c horse*
- 1978 Durer 1c7 horse
17c monkey
- 1979 Tapestries 2c horses*
- 1979 Marine 2c seashells
5c turtle
7c dolphin fish
25c shell
- 1979 Christmas 5c donkey
7c camel
11c donkey
- 1981 Europa 8c horses
- 1981 Industry 7c horse
- 1981 Commonwealth 12c horse
- 1984 Police 8c horse
- 1986 Peace 8c lamb*
- 1986 Europa 8c butterflies
- 1987 Christmas 2c sheep*, donkey*
- 1987 Seabed 8c fish
12c fish
MS fish
- 1988 International 19c snake*
- 1988 Christmas 3c sheep
- 1990 Pope 4c snake*



1990 Christmas 10c sheep, donkey*
25c sheep*

1991 PSM 10c snake*

1991 WWF 4c panda*
4c panda*
10c panda*
10c panda*

1991 Heritage LM1 horses

1992 Christmas 3c sheep*
10c camel*

1993 Elderly 5c swallow-tail butterfly
35c red admiral butterflies

1993 Councils 5c lion*
5c lion*, fish*
5c lamb*, snake*

1994 Commemorations 14c cow, pig

1995 Nature 14c wall lizards

1996 Cali' 14c dog

1997 Europa 35c horse*

1997 Christmas 6c donkey, sheep*
16c donkey*
26c sheep*

1998 Valletta MS lion

1998 Ocean 2c dolphin
6c sea urchin

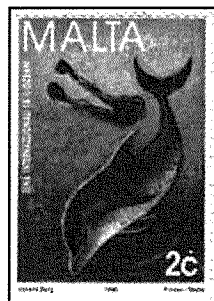
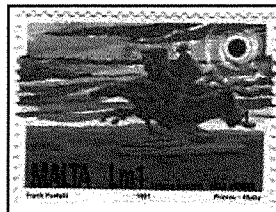
1998 Anniversaries 11c snake*
19c snake*

1999 Europa 35c fish*

1999 UPU 37c koala*

1999 Tourism 27c horse

1999 Sea Fauna 6c jellyfish
6c ornate wrasse
6c cuttlefish
6c sea urchin



- 6c grouper
- 6c bream
- 6c coral
- 6c spider crab
- 6c rainbow wrasse
- 6c octopus
- 6c triton's trumpet
- 6c parrot fish
- 6c seahorse
- 6c hermit crab
- 6c moray
- 6c starfish

1999-2001 Flowers 1c butterfly*

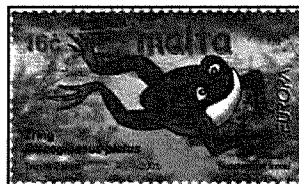
- 3c butterfly*
- 5c bee*
- 10c butterfly*
- 11c butterfly*
- 12c butterfly*
- 19c beetle*
- 20c butterfly*
- 27c ladybird*
- 50c ants, snail*
- LM1 caterpillar*
- LM2 butterfly*

2000 20th century 27c goat

2000 Children 6c dog

2001 Europa 16c frog

- 45c dragonfly
- 6c parrot fish
- 6c seahorse
- 6c hermit crab
- 6c moray
- 6c starfish



BEGINNERS section

The Hobby of Stamp Collecting

After the series bearing above heading which was published lately in our newsletter, by general request we have decided to end the series by a follow up/summary of a number of guidelines to ensure the right approach when taking up this hobby.

From Experience

(Jesmond Borg)

First of all when one decides about taking up stamp collecting, he has to think properly about the subject as to make the right choice of the country or countries he is about to work on. This also applies in the case of young collectors who decide to take a thematic subject. Having done this, one has to plan his collection, thus avoiding loss of time, energy and in most cases even money.

Secondly one must avoid purchasing or acquiring cheap stuff; both when speaking about the quality of albums and also about the stamps, particularly if these are bought. Speaking of albums, albums with sheets of bad material may in the long run damage the stamps by staining them. Regarding stamps these should be in an excellent condition as much as possible. Inexperienced collectors tend to confuse a CTO stamp with a postally used copy. By a CTO stamp it is meant stamps which were cancelled to order when a surplus of these, happens to be available. The cancellation of these stamps are printed on the sheets as they pass through the printing process. Most of these have a very neat looking cancellation on the corner of the stamp and they still have the gum on the back. These CTO stamps are available at quite a cheap price but are of little

philatelic value. So a collection will make a much better presentation with the best quality of material available.

Cheap stuff also includes cheap plastic page inserts in which album pages sometimes are stored. Many of these readily available plastic page holders have petroleum based chemicals in their production which long term would have a damaging effect on them; such as stamp colour peeling off or stains.

Speaking of storage one has to take also into consideration the place/room where our philatelic materials are stored. Humidity and places with very high or too low temperatures are not ideal to keep albums in. This also applies where the room temperature is quite inconsistent.

Lastley, to have a more presentable looking piece of work, a collection with sets of stamps should not include in the same album that of the 'first day covers', but separate albums should be used.

Always keep in mind that a little thinking ahead may save regrets later.

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!

WAR TAX STAMPS AND REVENUE STAMPS

(M'Grace Xerri)

The war tax stamps were issued by various entities within the British Empire during World War I (and in the case of North Borneo during World War II) to help fund the war effort. Generally these stamps were regular stamp issues that were overprinted WAR TAX or WAR STAMP. The War Tax Acts in most colonies and countries stated that the War Tax stamps were to be used in addition to whatever postage and registration fees were due, on the item being mailed. While the stamps were supposed to be used just to pay for the war tax. Quite often they were also used to pay part of the postage and registration fees. As long as the total amount with the war tax stamps was correct it appears that most countries did not seem to mind. In Malta only two stamps were issued with the overprint War Tax. These were issued in 1917 and the values were ½d and 3d.



Revenue stamps were stamps used on documents to collect taxes and fees. The use of revenue stamps goes back further than that of postage stamps. The stamps of the Stamp Act of the 18th century were revenues. Their use became widespread

in the 19th century partly inspired by the success of postage stamps and partly motivated by the desire to streamline government operation. The presence of a revenue stamp being an indication that the item in question had already paid the necessary fees. Revenue stamps have become less commonly seen in the 21st century with the rise of computerization and better ways to track payments. While revenue stamps often resemble postage stamps, they were not normally intended for use on mail, and therefore do not receive a postal cancellation. Some countries have issued stamps valid for both postage and revenue. One of the earliest use of revenue stamps was to pay court fees. Governments would enforce the payment of tax by making the unstamped documents invalid in court. Today these stamps are no longer in use and one can only find them on old documents or in private collections.



Where in the World ?! ()

(*Antoine Vassallo*)

Stamp Issuers Past and Present

Kenya Uganda & Tanganyika: (later *Kenya Uganda & Tanzania*) see East Africa Common Service Organization – now separate stamps only.

Kerassunde: Russian PO issue in 1909 for what is now the Turkish Black Sea port of Giresun.

KGCA: Yugoslav Carinthia (Koruska).

Khios = Chios.

Khmer = Cambodia.

Khor Fakkan: This dependency of Sharjah had its own stamps from 1965 to 1972, since when uses those of the United Arab Emirates.

Kiautschou: Chinese territory leased to Germany with stamps 1900-14, now Tsingtau.

Kibris = Cyprus.

King Edward VII Land: New Zealand issue for Antarctic expedition 1908.

Kionga: German East Africa region occupied by Portugal 1916.

Kipros = Cyprus.

KIRIBATI: Formerly the Gilbert Islands, this Pacific state issued stamps from 1979.

Kirin & Heilungchang: see Manchuria.

Kishangarh: Indian state with own stamps from 1899 to 1947 when became part of Rajasthan.

Klaipeda: Lithuanian issues for Memel 1923-5.

Knoxville :1861 issue for this US Confederate Tennessee town.

KOCHI Separate stamps for this Japanese prefecture were issued from 1991.

Korce = Korytsa.

Korea: Peninsula in eastern Asia with stamps from 1884 to 1905 when it was annexed to Japan; separate issues for North and South Korea from 1946.

KOREA (NORTH): Republic in the northern part of Korea with stamps from 1948; Russian administration issues 1946-8.

KOREA (SOUTH): Republic in the southern part of Korea with stamps from 1948; US administration issues 1946-8; North Korean occupation 1950.

Korytsa: stamps (*Korce*) for this "republic" in eastern Albania 1917-8.

Kos = Coo.

Kosovo Issues by the UN Administrative Mission from 2000 in this former Yugoslav region.

Kotor: stamps in 1944 for German occupation of this Adriatic Gulf formerly under Italian control (Cattaro); now part of Montenegro.

Kouang-Tcheau: Chinese territory leased to France with stamps 1906-44.

Kraljestvo or **Kraljevina** = Yugoslavia.

Kriti = Crete.

Kroaten = Croatia.

Krk see Veglia.

KSA = Saudi Arabia.

Kuban: South Russia territory with anti-Bolshevist stamps 1918-9.

(to be continued)

Bold italic = Inscriptions;

BOLD CAPITALS = Current Issuers;

Bold = Former Issuers.

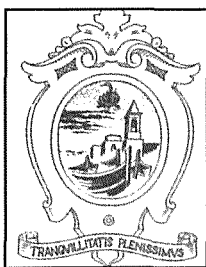
(Since it is obviously impossible to be completely exhaustive, you are encouraged to bring any gaps to my notice!)

PROMOTING GOZO THROUGH PHILATELY MARSALFORN



The 2009 Scenery set included three “Gozo-themed” stamps, the 2 cents depicting part of the coastline which can be considered as being within the generic “Marsalforn” area.

From just a fishing village on Gozo’s north (or north-east) coast, Marsalforn has now become the island’s most popular resort: it has gradually extended along the crescent-shaped rocky bay - hotels, apartment blocks, shops, restaurants and diving centres are nowadays more prominent than the few



fishing boats that still dot the little harbour and “*il-Menqa*” artificial port. Its size means that everywhere is within walking distance; despite increasing numbers of Gozitan, Maltese and foreign visitors and residents, Marsalforn can still be very tranquil in the off-peak seasons. Its motto is still *Tranquillitatis plenissimus* – “abounding in serenity”. The small central

beach may attract the crowds - but venture to the north west and you will find the bays of Qbajjar and Xwejni, much quieter for swimming; the salt pans (featured on the 37 cents) round here are centuries old, producing several tons of sea salt annually. A scenic road skirting the shore (or cliff edge) merits quite a few minutes! The fertile valley to the south offers another “natural” aspect.

Though NW winds do create a strong swell, Marsalforn served as the link between Gozo and the world until the

development of Mgarr harbour: where imported food and other supplies were unloaded and where passengers boarded to travel abroad. The Knights of the Order of Saint John, the rulers of Malta at the time, even considered abandoning the fortified citadel in the centre of the island and building a new town overlooking the port. However the islanders protested that they were too poor to pay the additional tax needed to finance the move and that the disruption caused by the transfer of their homes would be too great.

The name of this village confirms its value as a seaport: etymologically *marsa* means 'port' or 'bay' while *forn* (derived from Arabic *lifurna*) refers to 'ship'. However popular legends have developed based on the "normal" meaning of *forn* (oven, bakery or even kiln). The name might possibly also have been derived from *forna*, referring to "a cave hollowed out by the sea", of which there are several around here (including Ghar Qawqla).

A grand view of the whole area is viewable from the top of *il-Merzuq*, probably the hillock which most beckons for attention – especially since 1901 when a large wooden cross was erected on its peak, now replaced with a stone statue of Christ when the island was consecrated to the Saviour. The model for the present fiberglass-and-concrete statue towering twelve metres above what is now *tas-Salvatur* is said to have been the young Mario Grech (the future diocesan bishop), chosen by the artist (his uncle). The volcano-like form has resulted in the strongly-held (even if completely erroneous) belief that Gozo has such an origin: both *merzuq* and the alternative *mungbell* confirm this idea, having "volcanic" etymological connections. Another interesting site is *ta' Kuljat*, once a Bronze Age settlement.

(continued on page 20)

stamp terms used in PHILATELY (30)*(Emanuel Vella)*

Mourning Stamps: There have been a number of stamps paying sad tribute to deceased heads of state, etc., and which have been edged or printed in black. The following may be noted: Austria 1934 (Dolfuss); Belgium and Belgian Congo 1934 (King Albert); Belgium 1935 (Queen Astrid); Germany 1934 (Hindenburg); Greece 1936 (King Constantine) and 1945 (King George II); Yugoslavia 1934 (King Alexander); Liechtenstein 1947 (Princess Elsa); Lithuania 1927 (Dr. Basanavicus); Poland 1935 (Marshal Pilsudski) Russia 1924 (Lenin); Bulgaria 1944 (King Boris III) and quite a number from various countries in memory of Presidents Roosevelt and Kennedy of the US. In Great Britain they also had envelopes with black edges for mourning purposes.

Moveable Box: For many years, moveable posting-boxes were placed on board various cross-channel steamers sailing between England and the continent. They were first used as early as 1840's and their use was regularised under the Anglo-French Postal Convention of 1856. Letters posted in these boxes received special postmarks inscribed variously "Moveable Box", "Boite Mobile", or the initials 'M.B.' or 'B.M.' Moveable boxes were discontinued shortly before the Second World War.

Moyen Congo: Middle Congo.

Mozambique: Portuguese East Africa. The first issue were made in 1877. It embraces the former stamp issuing territories Of Louenco, Marques, Inhambane, Tete, Zambezia and the Mozambique and Nyassa Companies. These were all Mozambique companies.

Mozambique Company: This company was responsible for the exploration of the territories of Manica and Sofala up to 1946. It issued its own stamps under authority from 1892 to 1946. The company's territory is now included in Mozambique.

Mestia: (Spanish) Specimen or pattern.

Mukalla: An Aden state.

Mulreadies: This name is given to the prepaid enveloped and letter sheets, probably the best known items of postal stationery, issued on 6 May 1840, in conjunction with the Penny Black. They are so called after their designer, William Mulready. These were widely caricatured and were so ridiculed that they were withdrawn soon after.

Multa: (Portugese) Multa or fine. e.g. Postage Due.

Multada: (Spanish) Postate due of Chile.

Multiple Watermark: Those were the watermark device duplicated all over the sheet without regard to the size of the actual stamp, so that each stamp can show more than one watermark or parts of more than one device. This term is used in contrast to the single watermark where each device is planned to fall neatly into the area of one stamp only. Multiple or 'all-over' watermarks, are nowadays in much more frequent use than the single type. The first multiple watermark in the British Empire stamps - the Multi Cross CA - was introduced in 1904, replacing the single crown CA.

(to be continued)

Not just PAPER (2)

introducing a series highlighting examples of unusual stamp production

The United States' first attempt at a self-adhesive stamp was the 1974 10¢ Christmas Dove, issued on 15th November – added to two “normals”. Designed by Hedin and Geissman (based on the weathervane at Mount Vernon), it was printed on rouletted backing paper – precancelled, and so not coated with luminescence. Issued in sheets of fifty individual stamps, they were unfortunately plagued with problems for collectors.



After a few experimental issues, a second self-adhesive stamp was issued for national release almost exactly 18 years later: J Haiden designed an Eagle and Shield, printed by Fergusson-ABN. This rouletted stamp appeared on 10th November 1989 in a booklet (sold at a premium), to be peeled directly from the cover. Actually the Postal Service used special coils (also available for sale) to prepare FDCs.



POST HASTE (10)

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

(Antoine Vassallo)

“Down under” (A)

The first European settlement in Australia was established at Port Jackson (Sydney) on January 26, 1788, followed by others in Van Diemens Land (later renamed Tasmania) and Port Philip in 1803. More than twenty more years had to pass before any further expansion. Though all these initial attempts at colonization were coast-based, internal exploration was not excluded.

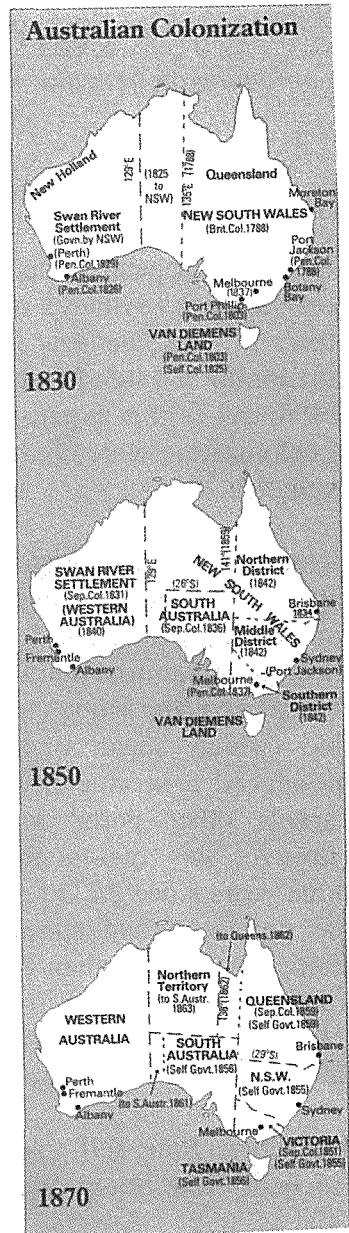
Contact with the home country (Britain) was obviously difficult because of the distance and thus the time necessary for messages to arrive – and more so for replies. Mail could travel in either direction via the Cape of Good Hope (southern Africa) or Cape Hope (southern America). In 1852 the P&O line (which began operating in the Far East by 1845) introduced a service from Singapore to Sydney – touching various other ports, including Adelaide and Melbourne. However this two-monthly service was discontinued after three years since P&O refused the new contractual terms. But the regularity had stimulated commercial interest and the European & Australian Royal Mail Co took it up in October 1856 – until it failed in 1858. The contractee again became P&O in March 1859; with a few minor alterations in routes and frequency, it maintained the contract up to World War I.

In the meantime, self-government began being granted in 1855 (to both New South Wales and Victoria). The six colonies

(who had become UPU members in 1891) were federated as the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, with Postage Due stamps issued in 1902. However postage stamps did not appear before the first day of 1913, since they preferred keeping their separate ones. But I now intend to go back and focus on each, beginning with the first state to be settled – New South Wales (which originally was described as including roughly the whole eastern half of the island).

A postal service began operating between Sydney and Parramatta as early as 1903, costing 2d per letter (equivalent to the present 2 euro-cents). Since most mail was arriving by private ship, a “collecting office” was set up in 1809 to serve as a distribution centre. In 1825 an Act was passed to expand the postal service. A mail-coach service was started from Sydney and the two penny post also operated in the Sydney area.

The Governor passed a new Postage Act in 1835, setting



rates on the bases of weight and distance. The Postmaster had been pressing for cheaper postage and was trying to make the prepayment of letters between NSW and Britain compulsory (corresponding with Rowland Hill). Not only was this not approved but, when he tried to imitate the mother country and introduce stamps (in 1841), official objections were raised against colonial use of this innovation. However the Governor had at least given him permission in 1838 (when there were forty post offices in the whole colony) to introduce cheaper local postage: envelopes were produced with an embossed colonial seal indicating prepayment. Surprisingly, their usage was sparse: statistics record a total of just fifteen thousand during 1848. By then, the “ship letter office” had been opened, a steamer service set up (between Sydney and Melbourne) and the first contract mail packet arrived from Britain (in 1844).

As a result of a December 1848 reforming Act, the first stamps (the so-called Sydney views) appeared on January 1, 1850 (also available for some years in Victoria and Queensland, as well as in New Hebrides and New Caledonia). The number of POs exceeded a hundred by 1852.

New South Wales also controlled the Northern Territory (the large area in the continent’s north and centre) until 1863, when the administration was transferred to South Australia. This resulted in the anomaly that Darwin is described in postmarks as being in the South, even though it is Australia’s northernmost city. The territory has never issued own stamps.

with acknowledgements to Rossiter & Flower’s Stamp Atlas

(from page 13)

The battery (commonly called “tower”, formerly “*Fortina tal-Qolla l-Bajda*” and now used as a commercial establishment) on the promontory between Qbajjar and Xwejni is the last vestige of a chain of fortifications built around Marsalforn to defend against enemy landings. It was raised between 1716 under the direction of two military engineers.

Marsalforn can be reached by foot or by car from Victoria (some 4 kilometres), Xaghra or Zebbug; this last particularly offering a zigzagging panoramic road. Though traditionally divided by the valley between the two villages which overlook it, the whole is now the responsibility of Zebbug local council (with a newly elected committee). However the Catholic Church has kept to its “separation”: thus the church dedicated to St Paul (supposedly re-built on the recommendations of Bishop Pietro Pace who lived and even bathed there each summer) falls under Xaghra parish. The foundation stone of the present church (constructed by Antonio Giardina) was laid in 1730, with feast days on February 10 and September 12; it has been enlarged various times – possibly losing its character – to better cater for the increasing number of residents and visitors.



Legend maintains that it was from Marsalforn that St Paul embarked to continue his voyage after his shipwreck in 60AD (as narrated in the Biblical Acts of the Apostles); this is symbolised by the village's **emblem**, which consists of a viper encircling a sword (on a blue shield encircled by a golden border) - and an alternative one includes the belfry.

To conclude with some philatelic information, Marsalforn's letterbox (MaltaPost's reference number is L508) is in *Triq il-Port* and a registered stamp vendor is on *Misrah Mikelang Refalo*. The postcode for addresses here begins with MFN.

Australian MALTA (17)

*another glimpse at the prize-winning collection
built up by John Vassallo, GPS member in Australia*



E & O not E (23)

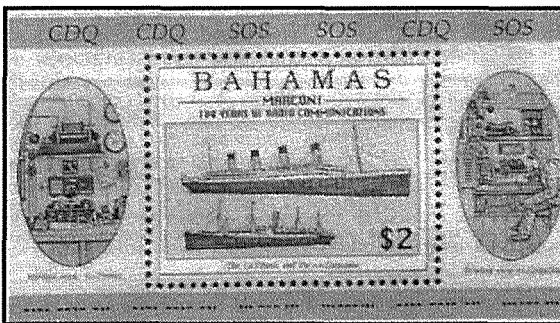
*glances at stamps with design or printing mistakes
(well-known or obscure)*

(Antoine Vassallo)

In 1996 the **Bahamas** issued a set celebrating Guglielmo Marconi on the centenary of radio communications. It consisted of four stamps and a miniature sheet, N Shewring depicting the Physics Nobel prizewinner's wireless trials abroad various ships. The sheet has a \$2 stamp showing the *Titanic* and the *Carpathia*, with their two wireless rooms sketched on the sides.

At the top of the sheet there is a blue strip with the (incorrect!) letters of the emergency message sent through South Foreland Lighthouse in Dover: CDQ CDQ SOS SOS CDQ SOS. This message, as converted into Morse Code dots and dashes, is shown in the lower band and reads (correctly) CQD CQD SOS SOS CQD SOS. Additionally, there was obviously also the Titanic's call letters (not standing for anything): MGY. The recognised call sign for ships - "CQD" - had been devised by the Marconi Company; it was intended to mean "all stations-urgent" but was popularly interpreted as "come quickly, danger," or "come quickly down". The "SOS" signal was established as an international distress signal

by an agreement made between the British Marconi Society and the German Telefunk Organisation at the Berlin radio conference in 1906 (formally introduced on July 1, 1908). But



both remained in use – and it seems that the Titanic at first used "CQD" before second Radio Officer Harold Bride (who survived by clinging to one of the upturned collapsible lifeboats) suggested interspersing "SOS" too.

The Titanic was the second of three near identical sister ships constructed by the Belfast firm of Harland and Wolff (whose managing director Thomas Andrews was the chief designer and head of the draughting department which was responsible for producing every drawing of every part – and was among the drowned) for the White Star Line, entering the water on May 31, 1911. It was then the biggest man-made object afloat: almost nine hundred feet in overall length, almost one hundred in breadth, over one hundred in height from keel to navigating bridge and almost fifty thousand gross tons. The Titanic (“she” in naval parlance) cost about one and a half million pounds and carried a total of twenty lifeboats (with a capacity of over one thousand). Interestingly, marine engineers have a purple band between the rank stripes as a mark of respect for the engineers lost in this disaster. I add also that Marconi was waiting in New York to return home to England on this impressive ship.

She departed from Southampton (England) on Wednesday April 10, 1912, sailing at midday - with a bunker fire which was only extinguished en route to New York. More passengers and mail were embarked at Cherbourg (France) and Queenstown (Ireland). She then sailed for New York, with arrival scheduled for Wednesday April 17. The ship would have headed westward along a "great circle" track before changing course at about 5 pm on Sunday April 14.

Most unfortunately, an important radio message relating to ice in the path of the ship was given to line Chairman Bruce Ismay – and he put it in his pocket to show to passengers instead of informing the officers immediately. The Titanic struck the “famous” (or infamous) iceberg at roughly 11.40 pm, the graze opening a 300ft split in her side – in spite of the watertight bulkheads which were supposed to make her unsinkable. Fourth Officer Joseph Boxhall fixed the ship’s position (using his estimation of speed and distance). Though this was the CQD "official" position given over the radio (the first distress signal being sent out at 12.10 am by Phillips, the wireless operator on duty who did not survive), the stern and heavy debris found on the sea floor indicate that the ship sank (at 2.20 am) over 13 miles ESE. Three ships responded:

Olympic, Frankfurt and Carpathia – this last being the closest (58 miles). The operator on the Californian - lying just 10 miles away - had gone to bed a few minutes before: since then, ships had to keep a constant radio watch.

Cunard's Carpathia, built by Swan & Hunter of Newcastle, made her maiden voyage on the May 5, 1903 and in March of the following year transferred to the New York-Mediterranean service. On the night of the April 14, 1912 she was directed by Captain Rostron to go to the assistance of the "competitor"'s Titanic. Luckily Harold Cottam, on duty aboard the Carpathia, had not shut his radio since he was waiting for the passenger traffic to slow down so that he could have a chat with his friend Phillips. No one could have been more surprised than Harold to hear "Come at once - we have struck an iceberg". The ship, which had been steaming westwards carrying a few American tourists and a lot of migrants returning home, immediately turned and - ignoring the ice packs - sped to the rescue (at a maximum speed two knots over her norm of fourteen). She arrived on the tragic scene at 4am and was able to rescue 703 of the 850 passengers and crew that had left the Titanic in lifeboats (many launched half empty); the survivors were later landed at New York. The Carpathia eventually became a victim herself: on the July 17, 1918 she was struck by three torpedoes.

The practical use of wireless telegraphy was made possible by Marconi in the closing years of the 19th century. Until then, ships at sea out of visual range were very much isolated from shore and other ships. Marconi, deciding that wireless would not compete with wire telegraphy for land-based communication, concentrated his efforts on this aspect: ships equipped with wireless were no longer isolated, the first use of wireless in communicating the need for assistance occurring in March of 1899. The number of ships equipped with wireless grew: by the end of 1912, there were 580 shipboard wireless installations. The loss of the Titanic brought the importance of wireless to everyone's attention! South Foreland (used by Marconi during his work on radio waves) achieved various "firsts" (including Faraday's first electrically-powered light); probably – although no longer in service – this lighthouse will remain famous for having relayed Titanic's distress signal!

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
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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
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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

Members' Meetings

are held regularly on the **1st Sunday** of the month
(resuming after the summer)

September 5 October 3 November 7

from 9.00am to 11 .00am

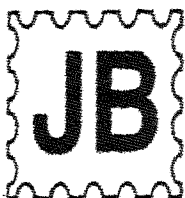
at Victoria Scouts HQ (Triq Santa Dminka).

exchange, purchase, information etc.

Entrance Free!

All Juniors will receive a gift of free stamps

- 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 2010 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!



**The JB Catalogue of Malta Stamps
and Postal History**

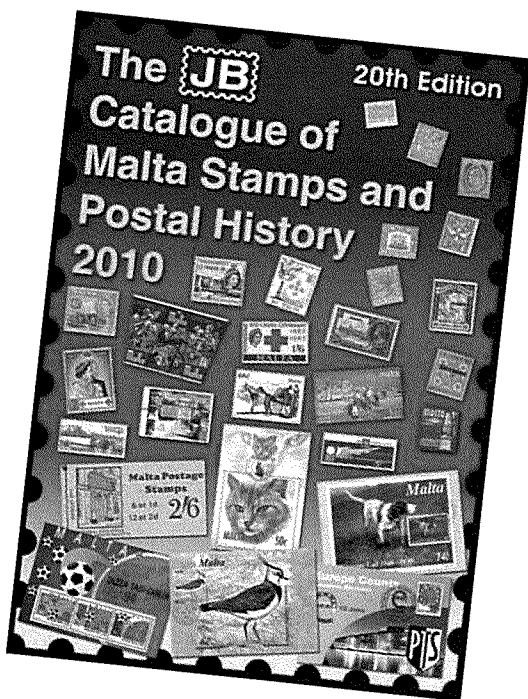
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