

January—March
No. 79—2020
www.stamps-gozo.org



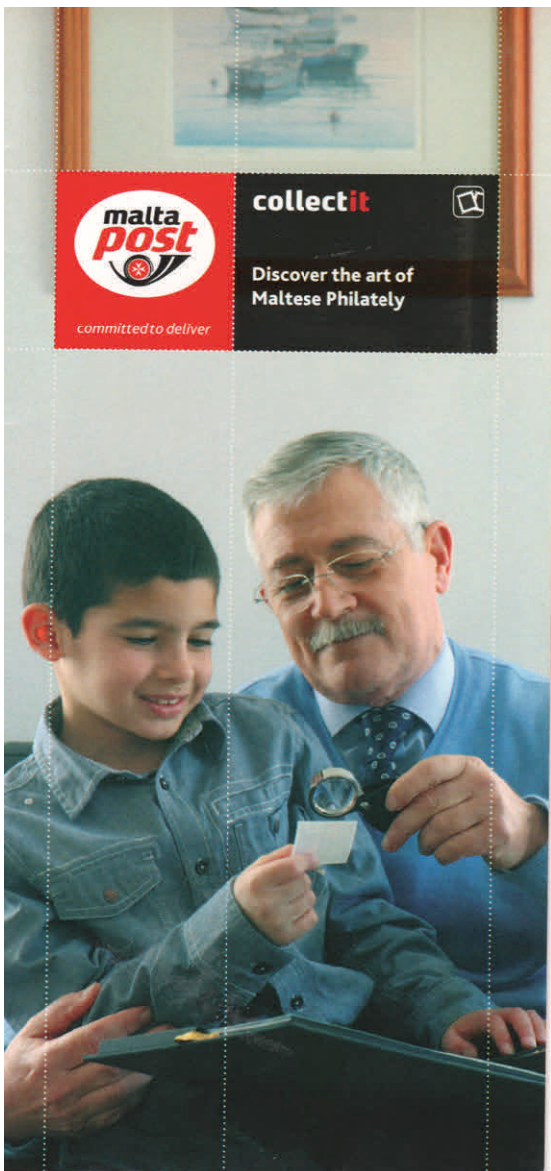
Gozo Philatelic Society
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**VISIT THE
MALTA POST-
AL
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The Gozo Philatelic Society was founded on 3 September 1999
for the promotion of the hobby,
the provision of a point of reference and co-ordination.

Front Page; Our Logo in Pyrography by our member Salvu Grch

GPS NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Organ of The Gozo Philatelic Society

First issued on the 12th February 2000 — Editor: Austin Masini — Issue No. 79 (1/2020)

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

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Gozo Philatelic Society Patron His Excellency President Dr George

CONTENTS.

| | | |
|--|------------------|----|
| G.P.S Diary | Antoine Vassallo | 4 |
| Correction to News Letter No 78 | The Editor | 4 |
| Philately in Fiction | Antoine Vassallo | 5 |
| GPS AGM Report 2020 | Antoine Vassallo | 6 |
| Gozo Philatelic Society 2020 Committee | The Editor | 7 |
| An FDC from each Issuer | Victor Gusman | 8 |
| Ġuzeppi Scicluna-Gozo postman..... | Joseph Bezzina | 10 |
| AGM & Prize giving ceremony in pictures | Mary Grace Xerri | 13 |
| Celebrity Philatelists-Cardinal Spellman | Antoine Vassallo | 14 |
| A History of Ġharb | John Cremona | 16 |
| Philatelic Centennials—First Madonna | Antoine Vassallo | 18 |
| Promoting Gozo Ta' Majmuna Tomb Stone | Antoine Vassallo | 20 |
| A harsh warning by an angry postmaster | Anthony Grech | 22 |
| Malta Overseas—Poland & St. Paul's Cathedral | Antoine Vassallo | 24 |
| Our Logo in Pyrography. A word of thanks | Jesmond Borg | 25 |
| True or False-Postmen can act as Social Workers? | Antoine Vassallo | 26 |
| E & O <u>not</u> E. (52) | Antoine Vassallo | 28 |
| Stamp Number One | Anthony Grech | 30 |

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 Second floor in top of PLAYPAN
OPEN EVERY SATURDAY FROM 9.30 AM

(73) *G.P.S. Diary*

Antoine Vassallo Gozo Philatelic Society Secretary

VO/0546



24 November 2019 We begin a series of stamp features in the Sunday paper in *Maltese Il-Leġen*.

26 November SMOM Christmas stamps in new *Milied f'Għawdex* exhibit in Il-Ħaġar GPS showcase

29 November Anthony Grech prepares Card for Għarb *Bambin* Christmas stamp

30 November Anthony Grech uses *Milied f'Għawdex* handstamp for traditional free Christmas card to members

December issue of Gibbons Stamp Monthly refers to the GPS in a Malta article

23 December Times of Malta features our Anthony Grech

12 January 2020 AGM (see p 6)

25 January During first meeting of the 21st Committee, posts were allocated.

7-12 February GPS participated in the Gozo Ministry initiative of *Inhobbok* Valentine fortnight through an exhibition of cards (organized by Mary Grace Xerri) in the Sannat Local Council hall.

11 February Anthony Grech, with their librarian Paul Galea, organized an introduction to stamps for Form I Minor Seminary students in the Catholic Action Hall. School Head Can Noel Saliba, as well as the GPS's Jesmond Borg and Antoine Vassallo, participated too.

18 February School visit by Anthony Grech to San Lawrenz Primary School

18 February School visit by Jesmond Borg to Qala Primary School.

CORRECTION TO NEWS LETTER 78—Sorry! 2 #78 slips

The last part of page 21 (Aitutaki) should have appeared at the end of page 13 (E & O not E).

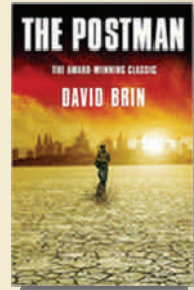
This paragraph was left out after the 10th line of the Malta Overseas instalment on page 26:

Dr Giovanni Bonello, probably Malta's most-published researcher, strongly argues - in one of his erudite articles in the Treasures of Malta periodical (published by Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti) - that closed balconies only debuted in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Actually they were simply the old ones enclosed and boxed-in, unfortunately contrasting strongly with the facade.

The Editor



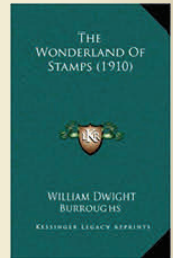
11= Arthur **Bray**: The Clue of the Postage Stamp (rare 1913 crime novel).



12= David **Brin**: The Postman (1985 post-apocalyptic novel about Gordon Krantz who borrows the jacket of a long-dead postal worker).



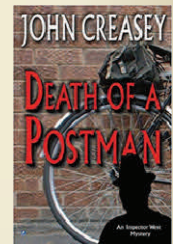
13= Charles **Bukowski**: Post Office (1971 autobiographical novel about years as a United States Postal Service employee).



14= William Dwight **Burroughs**: The Wonderland of Stamps (1910 collection of illustrated stories about interesting stamps from around the world).



15= Dr Jonathan Brace **Chittenden**: Stolen Stamps (“Philatelic Romance” written for the 1926 International Philatelic Exhibition in New York).



16= John **Creasey**: Death of a Postman (1956 action-packed suspense novel with Scotland Yard’s Inspector Roger West investigating the death of a quiet Post Office sorter).

AGM REPORT OF THE GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Antone Vassallo Secretary

At the first Committee meeting following the 19 th AGM, posts were agreed. Eight further formal meetings were held to prepare our various activities and discuss plans. Unfortunately numerous ideas mooted for this special year went unrealized because of the Committee's dearth of human resources.

□ The 20 th Annual GPS Exhibition was held in the Gozo Ministry Halls in November with a formal Opening by HE President Dr George Vella on the 2nd, unusually in the morning, and dismantling on the 12th. The level was high and the variety of exhibits made it most interesting. Unfortunately we had to make do with a sudden reduction of tables. Prizes (including those sponsored by MaltaPost), certificates and medals are being distributed today. In spite of a sustained effort, the only school class who visited came from the Seminary Secondary. More positively, HE – a fellow philatelist - accepted to be our patron.

□ Anthony Grech designed a personalized stamp for the Exhibition cover and handstamp, again offered by MaltaPost as part of our strong relationship. A commemoration on our exact anniversary was similarly supported. As our resident designer, Anthony prepared covers - or even the handstamp itself - whenever the opportunity arose (sometimes in collaboration with other bodies): Xewkija titular statue and Gharb Bambin stamps and Fra Baskal, “black St Paul” centenary (a special anniversary occasion), Ta’ Pinu altarpiece quatercentenary, St George dimostrazzjoni statue, Bishop Cefai and Milied f’Ghawdex commemorative handstamps (the last as a Christmas Card sent to members).

□ Our Il-Ħaġar showcase has seen regular replacements of the temporary mini exhibitions (sometimes within Gozo Ministry initiatives) and has continually attracted positive comments. We also continued to collaborate with other organizations, such as running sessions at the Don Bosco Oratory Summer Club. Three GPS members took part in this year’s Maltex.

□ Details about all this (and much more) are given in our quarterly Newsletter, for which Junior and new contributors are ardently invited to send letters and articles. Our Facebook page offers some coverage too but we have tried unsuccessfully to identify individuals who can regularly update the Website.

□ Besides the regular series of articles for the now seemingly defunct Faraġ national periodical, we grasp all similar opportunities to thematically publicize stampcollecting. The national Maltese weekly Il-Lehen “inherited” this adapted series from November. This year we had an article in the diocesan Ħajja f’Ghawdex and should have a series during 2020. Moreover, quite a few local and foreign publications again featured our society and productions. Anthony was the subject of a Times of Malta article. Attractive leaflets are available for distribution as publicity for our society.

□ A highlight of this special year was obviously the agreement finally signed on 3 May with Gozo Diocese Holdings regarding the office. However, though much work has taken place, the planned philatelic shop has not yet opened.

□ The room at the top of Main Gate Street will become increasingly useful for meetings and as the site for our library and the Juncker collection. I actually hope this convenient location will encourage other donations!

Wolfgang Juncker has sent still more material, obviously available at our new Putirjal office which is usually open on Saturday mornings for enquiries and library dips. We have an increasing range of philatelic publications for free perusal and loan.

□ The incoming Committee will certainly have a lot to do and so I hope more volunteers can be attracted!



Gozo Philatelic Society 2020 Committee

The Editor

Patron His Excellency President Dr George Abela

Hon Presidents

Michael Refalo PhD — Anton V. Said — Louis Bonello

President — Jesmond Borg

Vice President & Production Manager — Anthony Grech

Secretary — Antoine Vassallo

Treasurer — Felix Grech

Membership Secretary & School Coordinator — Mary Grace Xerri

PRO — Mark Anthony Poulton

Librarian — Vince Vella

Assistant Production Manager — Mario Casingena

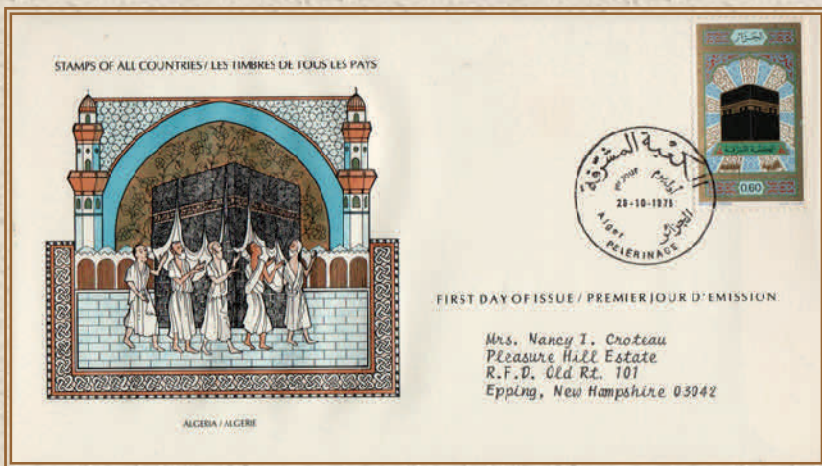
Exhibition Assistant — Frank Vella

GPS Malta representative — Rachel Debattista

Members— Saviour Grech — Lina Gauci — Raymond Buttigieg

An FDC from each Issuer

assorted postmarks and designs on the specially commissioned covers
in the “Stamps of all Countries / *Les Timbres des tous les Pays*” Collection
Victor Gusman



The stamp design – by Mohamed Temam - shows the Kaaba at Mecca. The first day postmark (Algiers, the capital) says *Pèlerinage*. The cover design shows another view of the Kaaba, together with pilgrims.



The stamp design shows a typical costume. The first day postmark (Andorra la Vella, the capital) is illustrated too. The cover design shows a collage symbolising the tiny state's administration.



ANTIGUA

This Easter stamp - designed by BG Studio – features a Durer engraving showing Jesus on the Cross. The first day postmark (St John’s, the capital) includes an outline of the island. The cover design shows a modern rendering of the Crucifixion, set in Durer’s Renaissance period. Antigua was later called called Antigua & Barbuda)



ASCENSION

This Ascension Day stamp – designed by Walsall Security Printers – shows a map of the island. The first day postmark includes a turtle, being an important breeding centre for them. The cover design shows sixteenth century ships as used by its discoverers



Gużeppi Scicluna

the Gozo postman who never made it home.

Joseph Bezzina

The 1948 Hondoq ir-Rummien tragedy

(1) Gużeppi Scicluna – the postman who never made it home – was born in Victoria, Gozo, on 7 March 1923, the son of Pawlu Scicluna, *tal-Ingliża*, and Marija née Portelli, *ta' Menzju*. He was baptized at the Gozo Cathedral two days later. His date registration at the Government Registry is wrongly recorded as 8 March.

He passed his childhood between his parents' home in Triq l-Assunta, just off the church of Ta' Savina and his father's grocery shop situated where Strada Nuova, triq De Soldanis, borders Strada Palma. As a young boy, he nurtured two interests. He was one of the *pagġi* or pageboys of the Blessed Sacrament at Ta' Savina and, as such, he passed half an hour adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament every week and attended regular meetings. His second interest was Santa Marija and the Leone Band Club, where his father Pawlu and his eldest brother Salvu were active members.

He attended the Victoria Primary School gaining excellent results. So much so that, in September 1934, he secured one of the only twenty-five places available at the Lyceum every year. He had in mind to follow on the footsteps of his three elder sisters, Mananni, Gużeppa, and Ċikka, all of whom were teachers. He passed the Matriculation Examinations with flying colours. It was June 1940, when the second World War had just reached the Maltese shores.

He became eighteen in March 1941. On 30 December of that year, *Government Notification 586*, in compliance with the *Compulsory Service Regulations* of 1941,

extended conscription to all men who had attained the age of eighteen. It was not long before he was enlisted into the armed forces. He formed part of the "C" Coy Tenth Battalion, KOMR, stationed at St Elmo, Valletta. His life was put in jeopardy a number of times during air-raids but he survived the war and, by 1945, he was discharged.

The upheavals of the war made him change his

mind. Salvu, his eldest brother, who had also been conscribed in the US army, had



The "C" Coy Tenth Battalion, KOMR, stationed at St Elmo, Valletta. Gużeppi is standing first from left, second row.

by that time found a very rewarding job with *Ford Motor Company* at Detroit, where he had emigrated in 1932. He invited Ġużeppi to join him with the idea of opening a restaurant serving Maltese food in the heart of Detroit where the community of Maltese was increasing at a fast pace. The idea pleased him. In the meantime, he found a job as **postman** with the *Posts Department* and he was stationed in Valletta.

He travelled to Malta early Monday morning and returned home to his family and his fiancée, Annie Camilleri from Victoria, every Saturday afternoon. Such was the hard life of a Gozitan working at Malta at a time when there were just three ferry crossings a day.

On Saturday, 30 October 1948, the Gozitans who worked in Malta were more anxious than usual to go to Gozo as they had been away from home for a fortnight. The weekend before they had been stranded in Malta as the so-called ferry service had been suspended; besides, it was a long weekend as Monday, 1 November, was a public holiday, feast of All Saints. They boarded a bus at Pjazza Kastilja to catch the last bus to Gozo at 3.15pm. Notwithstanding an unfavourable forecast – the sea was to develop a moderate swell from the south west (Ibiċ) – they hoped to make it home.

At that time the Gozo-Malta ferry service was, to say it mildly, horrendous – as one can perceive by going through the correspondence columns of the *Times of Malta*. The company that had won the Gozo-Malta ferry service monopoly in 1947 lacked the right vessels to operate. That October, it was being operated by the *Migrante*, a twin-screw motor yacht that was being converted for the purpose at the Malta Drydocks. As the company lacked another boat, the *Migrante* was put on the route halfway through its conversion. To make matters worse, the Wednesday before, the *Migrante* had run aground at ten in the morning. On that fateful Saturday, the captain, aware that his vessel was only halfway through its conversion and that the Wednesday's damage had only been partly patched up, decided that the sea was too choppy for the *Migrante* – eventually renamed *Banċinu*, but as a matter of fact still registered at Lloyds under its former name.



When the Gozo bus reached Mellieħa, the police informed the driver of the cancellation. The Gozitans wanted to proceed just the same for they had paid to Marfa, yet the driver would not go. It was not before they offered him an extra fare that he conceded

to their request. Others had reached Marfa before; there were twenty-five in all.

There was absolutely no shelter at Marfa. The south-westerly wind was blowing waves over the small breakwater, from time to time showering the passengers huddling under a rubble wall. Yet they would not lose heart; as had happened for a countless number of times in the past months, a Gozo boat would certainly come to their rescue.

Karmnu Grima ta' Ħanini from Qala and his assistant Salvu Refalo ta' Ħarbat from Ghajnsielem left Mgarr with their luzzu or Gozo boat for Marfa when someone informed them that several passengers were stranded there. The passage was not that

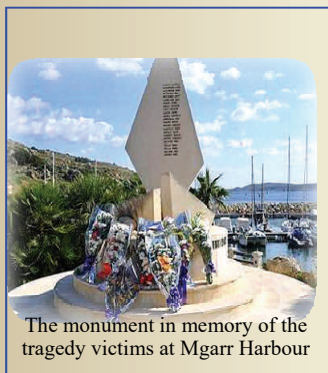
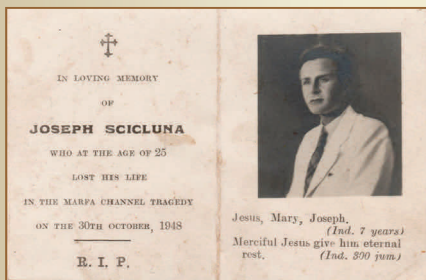
difficult, but trouble cropped up on arrival at Marfa. Karmnu insisted that it was not possible to carry twenty-five people on his boat. Yet their laments and entreaties were too much for kind-hearted Karmnu and he decided to take the whole lot.

It was seven in the evening and pitch darkness when they detached the moorings and began their trip home. They began to recite the Rosary and beseeching a safe passage to the Blessed Virgin Mary of Ta' Pinu. The captain decided to head for Comino and turn around the island to shield the boat from the wind. The first part of the passage was uneventful, but as they left the island, the boat began taking water as the south westerly wind began whipping up waves against it.

The passengers panicked. The boat overturned and everyone began going down. Ġużeppi, with the October salary well-tucked in his pocket, was a strong swimmer. He always won first prize in the swimming race from *il-Banju tal-Isqof* to *il-Menqa* and back in Marsalforn. He was confident that he would make it to land. However, a woman passenger unable to swim – as witnessed by Pawlu Zammit, one of the survivors – grasped him and dragged him to the bottom.

Twenty-three, including the captain and his assistant, drowned at Taċ-Ċawl, off Hondoq ir-Rummien. Four survived to recount the harrowing event. The corpse

of **Ġużeppi the postman**, to make matters worse, was only discovered and recovered from the sea four days later. His October salary of fourteen pounds sterling was still tucked up in his pocket and eventually handed over by the police to his mother and sisters, one of them my mother Ġorġa. When I was born, she named me Ġużeppi after my uncle – **the postman who never made it home.**



The monument in memory of the tragedy victims at Mgarr Harbour

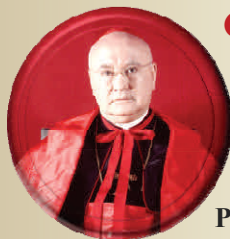
Appended:

(1) Photo taken for a passport in December 1947, months before he drowned.

Our AGM & Prize Giving Ceremony in pictures. 2019

Mary Grace Xerri





CELEBRITY PHILATELISTS

Antoine Vassallo highlights famous stampcollectors

Stamps do cast a spell!

The Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History, also commonly known as the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum, is a



not-for-profit organization dedicated to the appreciation of postage stamps and postal history and what they can teach us. Its principal mission remains the effort to highlight history and geography through its philatelic exhibits, helped by library, resource centre, and junior programmes. See www.spellmanmuseum.org.

The museum, located at Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts since 1963 has limited opening hours but hosts numerous special activities. Moreover the hobby is publicized via the internet, through emails and videos. They also publish a monthly calendar with daily philatelic connections.

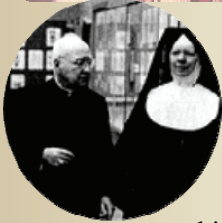
Founded in 1960, it now contains millions of philatelic items, ranging from postal history to artifacts related to communications through the mails. These include collections from the Philadelphia National Philatelic Museum (dissolved in 1960) and donations or loans from individuals such as President Dwight D. Eisenhower, musician Jascha Heifetz, and General Matthew Ridgway.

However the name refers to the fact that the foundation depended on Cardinal Francis Spellman and his personal collection. In fact he looked very positively at stampcollecting. Round about 1950, he wrote: "Stamps are miniature documents of human history. They are the means by which a country gives sensible expression to its hopes and needs; its beliefs and ideals. They mirror the past and presage the future. They delineate cultural attainments, industrial works, domestic, civil and social life. In a word, these vignettes give a vivid





picture of the world, its occupants and their multifarious endeavors."



the world. The collection expanded so much that he had to appoint a "caretaker" or curator in the person of Sister Fidelma Conway.

Francis Joseph Spellman (1889 –1967) was an American bishop and cardinal of the Catholic Church. Ordained a priest in 1916, he served as the sixth Archbishop of New York from 1939 until his death and was named a cardinal in 1946 (with the title of *Sanctorum Ioannis et Pauli*). He participated in the Second Vatican Council and in two conclaves (which resulted in the election of John XXIII and Paul VI respectively).



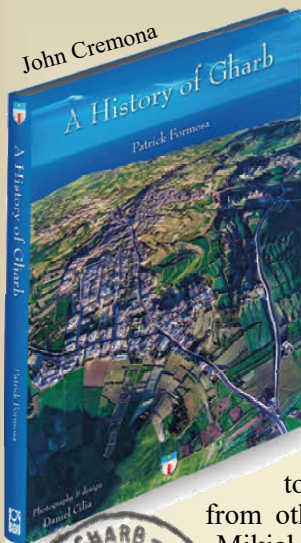
His father was a grocer whose own parents had emigrated to the United States from Ireland. The eldest of five children, Francis had two brothers and two sisters. As a child, he served as an altar boy. He suffered from pneumonia, resulting in a poor state of health.

Spellman was said to embody "the fusion of Americanism and Catholicism" in the mid-twentieth century. To quote author and ambassador William Vincent

Shannon, "Spellman's enduring accomplishments were his personal acts of kindness toward individuals and the religious and charitable institutions he founded or strengthened."



A History of Gharb



is a new book by Patrick Formosa, member of the Gozo Philatelic Society about the history, folklore and traditions of the locality of Gharb in Gozo. It has filled a big void and does justice to one of the oldest settlements on Gozo. The is a veritable treasure chest of information, photographs and voice recordings relating to this village. It has long been



known that its geographical position, cut-off from other settlements on the western part of Gozo, was one of the main reasons why this village preserved many buildings, traditions as well as

language characteristics which are particular to this locality and which have disappeared long ago from other localities in Malta and Gozo. Many scholars like

Mikiel Anton Vassalli, George Percy Badger and the Jesuit Emanuel Magri turned to Gharb and its people in order to collect and preserve remnants of ancient traditions, vocabulary and language.



This work knows its origin as a dissertation that the author presented in 1973 in fulfillment of his Bachelor of Arts' degree in the University of Malta. To compile this voluminous work, the author required to leaf through various archives, interview a number of elderly persons from the village, today no longer alive and record their anecdotes and trades by means of audio recorders and photography. The author also had the unique opportunity of interviewing a number of his relatives who played an important role in the religious and social sphere of this locality.



Recently, Patrick Formosa felt that his work should not remain accessible only through his dissertation at the University of Malta but decided to publish his work in a book. The author was required to revisit his earlier work and make a number of updates so that the book will offer more interesting reading. The author teamed up with renowned photographer Daniel Cilia who complemented Formosa's narration with magnificent photography which gives life to the book. The book is replete with beautiful photos showing various views and aspects of this locality complemented by the reproduction of a number of old photographs from the author's own collection which have been published for the first time in this book.

An innovative characteristic of this book is the inclusion of a USB which includes more than thirty interviews on folkloristic, religious and social aspects of Għarb. This is a treasure trove in its own right because apart from the information that it contains, one may listen to original interviews recorded in the particular dialect of Għarb which unfortunately has almost disappeared completely.

The book features also the Garbo (Għarb) Post Office hand stamp, an extremely rare and a proud item in any philatelist's collection. The present post office was officially opened on 18 May 1991.

The book, which is a welcome addition to Melitensia is a perfect gift for friends as well as emigrants. It should serve as an eye opener to Gozitans in general and to the inhabitants of Għarb in particular to care for the heritage left by their forefathers and learn to appreciate all the features which make the village of Għarb one of the most important localities of the Maltese islands.



The book may be acquired in Malta from the author (Tel no 21440029 or 79440029 or in Gozo from The Bookworm, in Victoria or Mr William Formosa on 99822805.

PHILATELIC CENTENNIALS

glances – and longer looks – at events from a hundred years ago

presented by Antoine Vassallo

25 – First Madonna (1920)

When the German state of Bavaria (*Bayern*) changed from a kingdom to a republic in 1918, previous stamps were overprinted *Volksstaat* (“People’s state”) and then *Freistaat* (“Free state”).



A new pictorial set was only issued in 1920, with five different designs. Sigmund Franz Xaver Wilhelm Otto von Weech – to give him his full name - offered a bi-coloured Madonna for the 1, 1¼, 1½ and 2½ Marks in March.

The inspiration for the artist was, seemingly, the statue of *Mary Patrona Bavariae* (Patron of Bavaria). This devotion is very old but the seventeenth century

provides sure documentary proof.

In 1616 Maximilian I (“elector” and, thus, ruler) installed a bronze statue of the Virgin Mary, cast by Bartolomäus Wenglein on a design by Hans Krumpper. The crowned Blessed Virgin stands with her right foot on the crescent moon, holding a sceptre (as heavenly queen); Baby Jesus, with a globe symbolizing his universal sovereignty, is on her other hand.

In 1638, acting on a vow if Munich were spared from the danger of the Thirty Years' War, Maximilian erected a marble column on the central square (which understandably became known as *Marienplatz*, Mary’s



square) to hold a gilded bronze statue whose origins are uncertain – but makes one think of the above.

The formal declaration of Mary’s patronage by Pope Benedict XV came in 1916 – during another critical period: World War I. Marian chapels and churches abound around Bavaria, with constant characteristics remaining the crescent, crown and sceptre – together with baby Jesus.



Returning to the stamps, they actually had quite a limited life since the Bavarian Post Office was incorporated within the German on 29 April of the same year. However this Marian image remained in use since remainders and reprints were overprinted *Deutsches Reich* in the following weeks for use all over the country.

This is usually considered the precursor of innumerable stamps showing the Blessed Virgin Mary from most countries, not least Christmas issues. It is worthwhile to note that already in October 1920



Liechtenstein had a Madonna design for the Prince’s birthday (1) and in 1921 Hungary produced a whole Madonna and Child set(2) On the other hand, Malta’s first only appeared in 1951.(3) To conclude, the Virgin Islands do not refer to the Virgin Mary (as sometimes wrongly stated) but were so named by Christopher Columbus after Saint



Ursula, the popular legendary early Christian martyred princess.



PROMOTING GOZO THROUGH PHILATELY **TA' MAJMUNA TOMB STONE**

Antoine Vassallo

Of uncertain nationality!

The 2½d stamp (inscribed “Saracenic Era”) in the 1964 definitive set shows a tombstone which is now housed in the Gozo Museum of Archeology. A previous reference to it can be found on page 13 of Newsletter 39.



This marble slab was used in the Roman period but then reused as a tombstone much later: we can see a 569 (AH) date on it, equivalent to 1174AD. This is decades after the Normans’ arrival but fifty years before the Arabs – with their religion – were actually expelled.

This recycling practice was quite usual in Islamic



North Africa: in fact certain historians even suggest that this example did not actually originate in our island. However an established tradition states that “*il-Ġebbla* (or *Ħagra*) *ta’ Majmuma*” was found at a site between Sannat and Xewkija, where there is a “Ta’ Majmuna” area (and a street so named). The wording on the slab states “This is the tomb of Majmuna”, concluding with a call to repentance.

Count Giovannantonio Ciantar’s *Malta Illustrata* in 1772 carried an illustration, (1) locating it in an unidentified private courtyard, without having it deciphered – in spite of a series of attempts at finding help, locally and overseas.

Not even learned Chaldean Mgr Giuseppe Simonio Assemani, orientalist author and Vatican Library official, ventured to solve the riddle.

Andrey Italinski, sent by Tsar Paul I during the insurrection against the French, succeeded in translating part of the inscription into Italian – publishing it in Vienna. He was advantaged through his formation; in fact he is described as ambassador to the Turkish Empire.

A further reference to the stone existence can be found in the notebooks written by an early nineteenth century cleric. A chain of ownership can be traced since then: Baron Muscat (inlaws of Cardinal Sceberras, the earliest known instance of a Maltese at such a high status within the Catholic Church), the Xara family and Baron Sir Giuseppe Maria de Piro - who donated it to the Biblioteca Public Library.

Since 1960 Majmuna resides within the Victoria Cittadella, making her an honorary Gozitan!

Majmuna is a Maltese rendition of an obvious Islamic name, having been given by Muhammad to one of his wives. Etymologically, it can mean blessed or lucky – in any case a “positive” name. Ours was the daughter of Hassan, son of Ali al-Hudali, known as Ibn as-Susi.

A final note: Justice Giovanni Bonello recalls that in 1933 his father hosted leading symphonic composer Ottorino Respighi who was so impressed by its intense poetry that he decided to set the lyrics to music.



Gozo Museum of Archeology



Composer Ottorino Respighi

A HARSH BY AN ANGRY POSTMASTER



Anthony Grech



An other curious item from my collection is a harsh, handwritten internal circular in Maltese from the Victoria Gozo Post Office. It is signed and even postmarked with the small Victoria Gozo Post Office single ring dated Dec 22 1954. The author wanted to make sure that it was not only an official warning but also a very serious one, so much so that he wrote the most important Parts in red ink.

The Maltese version:

Peress li għal aktar minn ħames xhur shaħ li ili fostkom, urejtuni li m'intkomx irgiel kif skond il-principji li halaq Alla l-Imbierk jissejaħ 'raġel' tassew ta' kellmtu, b'dispaċir u wisq kontra qalbi nixtieq nġharrafkom li minn għandi ma tarawx aktar ħniena.

Is-Sur Fiteni ġa avżat x'beħsibni naġġmel, għalekk oqghodu attenti għax ma l-anqas nuqqas ta kull wieħed minnkom, tintbġhat daqsxejn ta 'slip' Malta mbgħad isir dak li jsir. Dan japplika għal kull wieħed minnkom, mingħajr ebda distinzjoni ta' anzjanita, senjorita eċċ. Ebda skuża ma naċċetta; issa kulhadd avżat.

*Millum il-quddiem, Postman Gauci ma jgħin **LILL-HADD ASSOLUTAMENT**. Is-supranumru joqghod hawn ġew għal bżonnijiet ufficijali tiegħi **BISS**.*

Fl-aħharnett ippermettuli ngħid li qatt ma kont naħseb li se niġi ddusgustat b'dal mod b-ghemilkom.

*Naħfrilkom forsi, imma **NINSA QATT u s-Sur Tortell ġa avżat b'dan***

English translation

Since, for the over five months I've been here with you, you've shown me that you don't merit to be called gentlemen according to God's principles which lead to someone being respected as keeping to his word, I have to inform you, with a heavy heart and against my wishes, that you will not receive any more mercy from me.

Feres li, għal abtar minn
 hames xhur stajt li ili -fostrhom,
 waqtuni li m' inthomx irgħil kif
 shand il puncipli li halag Alla l-
 Imbriek f'issjappati "raġel" tassew ta'
 kullhentu, b' diappajir u urig b'omta
 qalli nixtieg nghanafhom li minn
 għandi ma tarawx abtar hena.
 Is-Sun Fiteni ja awjal x' b'elidoni
 nagħmel, għalhekk oggħodu attenti għax
 ma b' urigao nuggas ta' huall wieted
 minhom, t'imbogħad daqqaxi ta' "Slip"
 kullta u mbogħad isi dak li juri. Dan
 japplika għal huall wieted minhom, minn għax
 ebda distinzjoni ta' awganita, serjonta
 eċċ. Ebda skuzja ma narsjita; issa
 huallhed awjal.

Mr Fiteni has already been informed what I intend doing; so be alert since any shortcoming shown by any one of you will result in a note being sent to Malta, with whatever consequences.

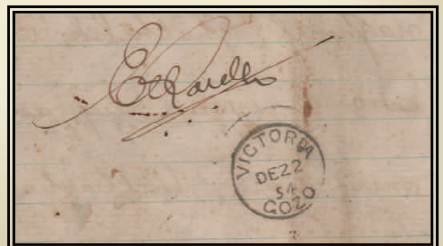
This applies to everyone, no matter how senior in years or grade. I will accept no excuse, now all are warned.

From today onwards, Postman Gauci is **ABSOLUTELY NOT ALLOWED TO HELP ANYONE**: anyone in excess is to stay here for my official needs **ONLY**.

Finally allow me to state that I could never have imagined that I would be so disgusted by your deeds.

I may forgive you but **I WILL NEVER FORGET** I have already advised Mr Tortell about this.

Tiellum il quddiem, Postman Gauci,
 ma jgħid LILL-HADD ASSOLUTAMENT,
 it supranunnu f'ogħod hawn jpur għal
 lejnijet sufficjenti tiegħi BISS.
 Il-aktarutt i'ppermittuli ngħid li
 għali ma huall matarb li se nigi delisquolat
 b' dal-mad b' egħmilhom.
 T'atpilkom fori, inmma **NINSA' QATT**
 u s-sun Fiteni ja awjalta b' dan



MALTA OVERSEAS

local connections on foreign stamps (33)

Antoine Vassallo



Malta has two Cathedrals dedicated to Saint Paul: the first is that at Mdina, the other (shown on a 1994 stamp – covered in Newsletter 22) is in Valletta. The full name of the latter is Pro-Cathedral and Collegiate Church of Saint Paul, one of the three in the Anglican Diocese of “Gibraltar in Europe”. This building was chosen by Poland to represent us in its 2006 set of EU capitals.

This was understandable since St Paul’s is a universally recognised Valletta landmark. With the bell-tower and its spire rising some 60 metres, it is an iconic skyline element. It is considered a vital part of Malta’s rich cultural heritage and deeply symbolic of close Anglo-Maltese relations over more than two centuries. A major restoration project is underway to try to correct past mistaken decisions, as well as damage over the years.

Queen Adelaide, the widow of William IV, was keen to found a



Collegiate church in the Anglican tradition. She laid the foundation stone on 20th March 1839 on the site provided by the Government: where the *Auberge d’Allemagne* (the conventual home of the German Knights) had stood. But the original building designed by Richard Lankasheer (a cabinet-maker by profession!) proved unstable and work started again in 1841 under new designs by William Scamp (who had been involved in the remodelling of Windsor Castle). The Collegiate Church of St Paul’s was formally consecrated by the Bishop of Gibraltar on 1st November 1844, even though the spire had not yet been completed.



The building is designed to a neo-classical architectural style with a grand temple-front portico incorporating Ionic columns. An array of eight Corinthian columns embellish its interior. Scamp’s rather severe interior

with its pillars (made of good quality stone quarried from near St George’s Bay and transported to Valletta by the Royal Navy) and fluted engaged pilasters topped by Corinthian capitals supporting a cornice are architecturally harmonious and provide a dignified grandeur.

Despite its prominent and vulnerable position during the Second World War in “the most bombed city in Europe”, the Cathedral escaped serious damage. But the glass windows had to be completely replaced after the bombing, with further necessary repairs and adaptations. The Archbishop of Canterbury himself dedicated the new Chancel on 2nd December 1949 (the centenary of Adelaide’s death) in the presence of Princess Elizabeth who was visiting Prince Philip during his period of naval service in Malta.

St Paul’s now houses the memorials of all units of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force on the oak panels around the Sanctuary. A Merchant Navy Memorial is located on the north wall and a Submariners Memorial Plaque is situated outside. The wooden lectern commemorates Sir Winston Churchill.

The historic organ and casework, originally built in 1684 for Chester Cathedral, was restored in 2013. Interestingly, tradition states that it had been played by George Handel to fine-tune his “Messiah”, on his way for its first performance. A head and shoulders portrait of St Paul (by Mattia Preti and his *bottega*) stands behind the Altar in the Reredos, together with a Chalon *Ecce Homo* (a de Piro long-term loan).

Concluding this brief overview, one should note that the National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands gave this building a Very High Value assessment.

with acknowledgments to www.savethecathedral.com

You are invited to send write-ups (or even just suggestions)

about other foreign stamps with themes or designs related to Malta



OUR LOGO IN PYROGRAPHY

On behalf of the Gozo Philatelic Society I would like to thank our member, Mr Salvu Grech for his generous donation of the GPS Logo artistically executed in Pyrography. This work of art will be used during our exhibitions and other important activities.

Jesmond Borg—President of the GPS.

Is it really **TRUE** that... (15)



Postmen can act as Social Workers?!

A major modern problem is loneliness, especially among the elderly. The post can obviously be used to send letters to keep communicating. But is that really enough? A couple of interesting experiments show innovative alternative uses of postal workers –

and provide income for the postal service!

In 2014 Jersey Post introduced a scheme run in conjunction with the Health and Social Services Department to provide a simple way of checking on people in the community who might need extra help and support. Postal workers undergo enhanced police checks and receive basic first aid training before taking part: they are meant to pass on any worries or concerns to the individual's contacts and support network.

The aim is that as many islanders as possible can live in their own homes and enjoy full, independent lives as long as they are supported adequately. A special projects manager at Jersey Post explained: "We've found that not only do those who have signed up to the scheme find the face-to-face contact reassuring and welcoming, but it also provides peace of mind for their family, who may not be able to visit regularly."

Interestingly, this scheme took top spot in the Corporate Social Responsibility category at the World Mail Awards that year. But something similar has been tried in bigger territories too, including the United States and Germany.

Veiller sur mes parents (Watch over my relatives) was the name given for the service introduced in France by La Poste. Customers can pay for postal workers to check on their elderly relatives during morning rounds. This has been hailed as a clever solution to the modern epidemic of loneliness: using the post's



Veiller sur mes parents

Une entreprise du Groupe La Poste



extensive presence in every corner to reach the elderly in isolated areas.

Visits can be weekly or even daily, with a report delivered to the family and even an option of a 24-hour helpline and alert system – with a basic fee of some twenty euro monthly. People are

living longer, mostly want to stay in their own homes as long as they can. These types of social links are increasingly needed as mobility grows and adult sons and daughters move away from their ageing parents.



Postal workers have always spontaneously connected informally with clients but now other (paid!) schemes are being formalized by La Poste. These include delivering shop supplies, basic prescriptions, library books and hot meals – also supported by local councils. An interesting idea is handing the house-bound printouts of photos and messages.

A former employee in the 1970s remembers: “older persons in remote rural locations subscribed to a daily newspaper just so the postman would come round to deliver it – that would be the only one they saw.”



Antoine Vassallo

as for other series, readers are invited to submit their own articles or even just suggestion

E & O not E (52)

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



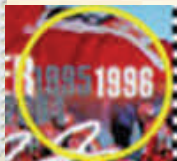
Not for the first time – nor the last – Austria prepared a miniature sheet (designed by Anita Kern) to celebrate classic stamps. In 2017 it was the turn of 1860. Unfortunately, someone made a mistake in the choice of one of the two stamps included. Happily, collectors noted the double error in time for the sheet to be corrected and – with a short delay – issued.

The 68 cent stamp was the culprit! On the original design, it is described as being issued in 1860 by the kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. This 10 soldi actually appeared two years later, when this kingdom no longer existed since Sardinia took over Lombardy in 1861. As vertically captioned exactly, the territory was now just Venetia (or Venetian provinces). The whole area is sometimes still called by philatelists “Austrian Italy”.

The sheet companion (15 kreuzer) did have an Austrian 1860 DoB! Obviously both show Emperor Francis Joseph I (by medalist Josef Tautenhayn). It is worthwhile to note that parallel stamps were needed because of different currencies (100 kreuzer = 1 Gulden in Austria, as opposed to 100 soldi = 1 Florin).



Another unconnected – Austrian date error had already appeared in celebrating Formula One driver Michael Schumacher in 2006. He became World Champion in 1994, 1995 and from 2000 to 2004. Thus the 1996 shown was a mistake.



Sometimes Austrian stamps appear without *Osterreich* or *Austria* on: these nameless or anonymous issues can be considered as errors. Even if purposely so prepared because the country is obvious be-



cause the design incorporates a clear reference to the issuer, this at least contravenes UPU regulations.

This example (designed by ORF Marketing and printed on silver foil) was issued on the occasion of the 2015 Eurovision Song Festival held in Vienna, Austria's capital - as everyone knows!



Concluding this survey of Austrian errors, I highlight one of the stamps among the 1934 regional costumes by G Jung. The 6 groschen (representing Lower Austria) showed a man with inverted ears!

(which probably needs a magnifier) was corrected the next year.



Anthony Grech



Based mainly on Stanley Gibbons Catalogues.

Abbreviations; Op.=Overprint or Overprinted.

Ins.= Inscribed, Sur.=Surcharged

rot=Protectorate



**NYASSA
OWN
ISSUES
1901**



**OBOCK O/p
FRANCE
STAMPS 1892**



**OBOCK
OWN ISSUES
1893**



**OCEANIC
SETTLEMENTS**

**O/P France
stamps
1892**



**OWN ISSUES
1913**



**OLDENBURG
1852**



**OMAN
O/P Muscat &
Oman Stamps
1971**



**OMAN
SULTANATE
1971**



**ORANGE
FREE STATE
1868**



**ORCHHA
1913**



**PAHANG
O/P Strait Set-
tlements
Stamps
1889**



**PAHANG
own Issue
1891**



**PAKHOI
O/P Indo Chi-
na Stamps
1903**



**PAKISTAN
O/P India
Stamps
1947**



**PAKISTAN
OWN ISSUE
1948**



**PALESTINE
1918**



**PANAMA
1878**



**PAPAL
STATES
1852**



**PAPUA
1901**

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|
|  <p>PAPUA NEW GUINEA 1952</p> |  <p>PARAGUAY 1870</p> |  <p>PARMA 1852</p> |  <p>PATIALA o.p. India stamps 1884</p> |  <p>PENRHYN ISLAND o.p New Zealand stamps</p> |  <p>PERAK o.p Strait Settlements stamp 1878</p> | |
|  <p>PERAK Own issue 1892</p> |  <p>PERLIS 1948</p> |  <p>PERU 1858</p> |  <p>PHILIPPINES Spanish US Admin., Own Issues 1854 1899 1926</p> | |  <p>PITCAIRN ISLANDS 1940</p> | |
|  <p>POLAND 1860</p> |  <p>PONTA DELGADA o.p Portugal stamps 1892</p> |  <p>POONCH 1876</p> |  <p>PORT LAGOS o.p France stamps 1893</p> |  <p>PORT SAID o.p France stamp 1899</p> |  <p>PORTUGAL 1853</p> |  <p>PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND 1861</p> |
|  <p>PRUSSIA 1850</p> |  <p>PUERTO RICO 1893</p> |  <p>QATAR o.p Great Britain stamps 1957</p> |  <p>QATAR Own issue 1961</p> |  <p>QUEENSLAND 1860</p> |  <p>QUELIMANE Portugal stamps 1913</p> | |
|  <p>RAJASTHAN 1949</p> |  <p>RAJPIPLA 1880</p> |  <p>RAS AL KHAIMA 1964</p> | | | | |

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