

NEWSLETTER No. 2 – 2000

G P S Diary (2) Consolidation

Antoine Vassallo (Secretary)

It is fair to state that the Gozo Philatelic Society is filling a void: this is confirmed by the increasing number of members (even abroad)! Our contacts have not been limited locally: we have enrolled in the UK-based Malta Study Circle and foreign publications have covered our activities. In general the media have been most cooperative, including programmes on community radios.

25th March 2000 - Religious Stamp Exhibition at *Dar il-Lunzjata* (with HL Bishop Cauchi among interested visitors) and Mass. Newsletter distribution begun.

25th April 2000 - Exhibition at Xaghra local council premises.

1st May 2000 - Our initiative led to a commemorative postmark for the Centenary from the first Branch Office in Gozo (at the *Banca Giuratale*) and a special morning there; special covers prepared.

27th May 2000 - Opening (by Minister Debono and blessing by Bishop Cauchi) of our First Philatelic Exhibition at the Exhibition Hall in St Francis Square, Victoria: acclaimed as an excellent first attempt with a wide participation and active visitors. (Sponsored by Bank of Valletta, with support from the Cultural Council and the Sliema Stamp Shop).

4th June 2000 - Judging of competitive entries and closing of Exhibition.

22nd July 2000 - Activity for Juniors at the Cathedral Parish Public Library.

2nd September 2000 - Distribution of Exhibition certificates; postmarking of special card at the end of first year's activities.

21st-22nd October 2000 - Participation in "Maltex 2000" Philatelic Show.

28th October 2000 - Visit of MSC's "Melita" Editor.

All these activities (and other preparations) of course mean numerous Committee and sub-committee meetings.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF COLLECTING STAMPS

Michael Refalo

Many of us are used to collecting stamps of one country or of a group of countries. Collecting in this way entails a search for all the stamps of that country or group of countries. With time the collection increases but collecting becomes more and more difficult. Often we reach the stage when our country collection is nearly complete - we only miss those stamps which are rare and, consequently expensive. What do we do then? Stop collecting that country?

There are various avenues one can take when this stage is reached. I propose to mention a few in order to help collectors, especially the younger ones, not to despair that their collection is not, and perhaps never, is going to be a complete one.

First of all one can collect both the used and the mint stamps of the same country. In this way one would be 'doubling' the collection. Although I may have one particular stamp in mint condition I can do my best to obtain it also in used condition. Prices and availability may vary between one condition of the stamp and another. One stamp in used condition may be rare but quite common in mint condition. We all know that smaller countries may issue a great number of stamps, much more, in fact that they require for postal use. The consequence of this is that these stamps are cheaply available in mint condition but rarer in used condition. In this connection one should distinguish between genuinely used stamps and CTOs. The latter words stand for "Cancelled to order" - mint stamps are cancelled without being postally used. If possible one should tend to avoid CTOs since they do not represent a genuine postal use.

Another option is to look for something else apart from the stamps themselves. Sometimes, we receive a lot of mail from one particular country like the United Kingdom. Why not collect the stamps and the envelope itself? The cancellations on stamps may vary and one can indeed make up a very interesting collection of envelopes with the same stamp but with different cancellations! If one takes a good look at the envelope before tearing the stamp one may find not only the stamp cancellation but also adverts, warnings and slogans. For example, if one takes a look at the stamps from Great Britain (but not only Great Britain) one will see such things as "Use the Post Code" or "Happy Christmas". Apart from these slogans there may be marks giving clues as to the journey which that envelope has made through the posts. For example, it is quite common to see a cancellation which says "Delayed because of insufficient postage" or "Received in this condition". All of these markings may indeed make an interesting collection. There are also rarer ones like "Missent to..." when a letter is sent to one country instead of another by mistake, or, rarer still "Damaged by....." when there has been a fire or other disaster on the plane or boat on which the mail was carried. Indeed, if one is careful before tearing the envelope, one can make up not only a great collection but also a valuable one since some of the markings may be rare. A collection with the same stamp on each envelope but with different markings on the envelope would be a collection to which many aspire!

As with everything in life, we should use our imagination in stamp collecting. An effort at thought may be repaid in future satisfaction. □

A LETTER FROM THE TOWER OF COMINO

Anthony Grech

M^o Sig^o

La presente servirà a dare grazie a V. S. Ill^{ma} del fatto
 occorso li 28. g^o sc^ozi. quell^o vennero due spionare da
 Malta gli Sicilias, e rimasero nel Comino due giorni, ed
 notti, e pochi con buon tempo, e no hanno partito sin per
 deliqui due fogge se l'ha inteso colli galelotti del Com
 & imbarcare persona di Cottone, subito feci la guardia
 nella dove notte, e giorno, uno dei quali Guardiani di re
 Egipti Egi^o albrake doveva fare la sua guardia, & per
 riporre agl' altri non hi voluto farlo, e mi parlò mal
 del che mi ero prejudicato, e quindi sono a fare le
 mie ing^o a di lui & la d'antumi soliffa.

Per altre mancanze che mi avon fatto altre volte, avon
 d'ordine del Sig^o Legato Anticij^o di Catania, mi so
 slantia la legacia, quest^o è quanto sono a rispondere V. S.
 • M^o e con ogni dante prima sono & sempre.

Di V. S. Ill^{ma}.

Ego li 28. Ottobre 1797.

Chi l'ud. Aldicant^o
 Magillano del Comino.

Antonio Caruana

DECEMBER 2000

This is a translation of a letter sent from the Comino Tower
on the 28th of October, 1797.

The original letter was part of the exhibit that won
First Prize in the First Gozo Philatelic Society Exhibition
held from the 27th of May till the 4th of June 2000.

Most Eminent Lord,

Let this letter serve to inform your Most Eminence
Lordship of the fact that took place in the past days,
when two sailing boats came from Malta to Sicily and
stayed in Comino for two days and two nights and
because the weather was fine, they did not leave as
planned (and) because they could have reached an accord
with the farmers of Comino to load cotton seed,
immediately I organized guards from the tower, night
and day. One of these guards named Guzeppi Gafa,
when it was his turn to do his turn of guard so that, the
others would have a rest, he refused and used foul
language towards me, hence he prejudiced me and so I
am doing this report for the satisfaction I deserve.

For his several other misconducts, I had the order of his
Lordship 'Segriet Antecessur' to fire him, but by an act
of charity, I let him stay. This is all I have to notify
to your Most Eminent Lordship and with all due respect
I remain, your Most Eminent Lordship's obedient
servant.

The Castellan of Comino

Antonio Caruana

Gozo 28th October, 1797.

STAMP COLLECTING

Fixing Stamps On Covers or Cards

(Not to get the undesired stains)

George Vella

To the surprise stamp collectors, when after some time they review the covers or cards that they themselves have made or that they have collected, they find out that they are stained. These stains are often brownish and are on the periphery of the stamp or the edges where the perforations are to be found. This matter worries a lot the serious collector. It is a common dilemma even though the best precautions are taken.

Here one has to study the cause. A collector always knows that stamps, covers and cards are to be stored in a dry and airy place and from time to time these have to be taken out from their 'hideout' to be examined, aired and appreciated. Sunlight for a prolonged period is to be avoided. Such stains are often the result of a humid storage place, yet even the best stored stamps and covers might be stained in the manner we mentioned previously. The common cause in such a case is the quality of paper used for fixing stamps on covers and cards. If the quality of paper is of a poor grade and is acidic, such stains are to turn up to ruin some of your collection. Painters, sketchers and especially watercolourists have the same problem, they have to choose the right paper which is acid-free.

Now the problem is how to tackle the matter. First of all there are specialized people who can help you solve your case in question if you have such stains on you covers or cards. Never intervene yourself if you do not know the technique!

From my humble experience I advise that good quality paper, both for covers and cards, is always to be sought for.

Furthermore, as I have found lately, I advise not to use the water-roller at the post office, tap water or saliva to gum your stamps on your covers or cards. these may react with the paper and undesired stains may issue. Here one may ask what is the alternative. A very simple technique that has come to my mind, and which I am using, is to have a very small plastic container, say a photographic film container, and to fit in it a clean sponge which is wetted with **distilled water**. This water is neutral and does not contain any chemicals. You use this to wet your stamps before fixing them on your covers or cards. You can take this small container to the post office, and always see that it is clean and supplied with fresh distilled water. Saliva is always bad to gum your stamps and is a chief cause to react with poor quality paper to issue the undesired stains.

As I have experimented lately with this technique, I have to wait for the end results as time pass by. □

Editorial Note

As the new editor of the 2nd issue of this Newsletter I welcome you all. It has been decided that from next year this Newsletter will be published every quarter i.e. during March, June, September and December. Anyone who wishes to publish any article regarding Philately is invited to send the material to the Editor, Gozo Philatelic Society, PO Box 10, Victoria, Gozo VCT 101 or hand it in personally. We will be very pleased with your participation. Moreover any suggestions to ameliorate this publication will be very much appreciated.

On behalf of the committee I would also like to take this opportunity and wish all our readers our sincere greetings for a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

AUSTIN MASINI

Nineteenth Century Postal Arrangements in Gozo Conveyance of Mail between the Two Islands

Anton F. Attard

In 1887, Mr F. V. Inglott, Postmaster General, submitted a report on new Postal Arrangements for Gozo which included Regulations and Instructions for the Detached Post Officers and Letter Carriers (Postmen). Luckily for us, Mr Inglott started his report by a detailed introduction regarding the Nineteenth Century Postal Arrangements in Gozo for the Conveyance of Mail between the Two Islands. This report, transcribed from a tattered document is being reproduced here for the benefit of all members and Gozitans in general.

Previous to 1854 no regular postal communication existed between Malta and Gozo. The messengers of the Government Branch Offices and the Boat men were availed of for the conveyance of the Official and Private correspondence who travelled from one Island to the other as occasion required.

In the beginning of 1854 a Vote of £40 was taken (See Second Supplementary Estimate for 1854, passed at meeting of Council of 8 February 1854) to provide for the expenses to be incurred for the conveyance of the Inland mail and a messenger (Andrea Hili) was hired at £2.10.0 (Lm2.50,0) per month to convey the Daily Mails between the two Islands.

Shortly after the year 1859 an Omnibus was established between Valletta and Marfa, a Boat between Marfa and Mgar, and a Cart between Mgar and Rabato, by Paolo Saliba, who undertook to convey daily the Gozo Mails for an annual subsidy of £100, and passengers at 2s/- (10c) from Valletta to Mgar and 2s/- from Mgar to Valletta, but Andrea Hili, the Government Messenger, was to travel with the Mails free of charge.

The starting office in Valletta was Saliba's mews (in the Palazzo Parisio) and that of Gozo the Police Stations at Rabato and Mgar.

The Official correspondence was collected daily by Andrea Hili, from the Government Branch Offices and the Private from all parts of the Island, and was delivered by the Public at the Police Stations of Rabato and Mgar, from which places Andrea Hili, the Government messenger, received it and conveyed it to the General Post Office.

At the end of June 1885, this arrangement ceased, as a daily steam communication having been established between the two Islands for the convenience of the Public, advantage was taken of the circumstance, and a clause inserted in the contract of the New Service, binding the contractor to convey the Daily Mails between Malta and Gozo, free of charge.

On the 1st of July 1885, the *Gleneagles*, the Steam Vessel contracted for, commenced to run with our mails, departing and arriving according to a Time Table, and receiving from that date an annual subsidy of £750.

Travelling by Saliba's mode of conveyance the journey from Valletta to Rabato Gozo, and vice versa occupied no less than 7 hours starting at 9 a.m. and arriving at 4 p.m. provided no mishap occurred on the way to the vehicles, such as a horse becoming restive, a wheel getting out of order, an oar breaking from age, sails useless for want of wind etc. added to which the inconvenience from dust and heat in summer and mud and rain in winter, during the land transport and the uncomfortable and dangerous boat passage between Islands. By the present civilised mode of transit no more than two hours are required and expense not exceeding 2s/6d without any other discomfort that an occasional slight uneasiness caused by the inevitable motion of the vessel.

Soon after the establishment of the steam communication my Predecessor submitted certain postal arrangements to which the following are recommended to be substituted.

Signed F. V. Inglott
Postmaster

ADVERTS

It is worth noting that one page in this newsletter is being reserved for adverts pertaining philately. Any advert will cost from LM1.00 to LM2.00 respectively. However adverts pertaining to other matter will also be published on demand. Please contact the editor for prices of a quarter, half or full page.

ADVERT 1

The Gozo Philatelic Society has for sale a limited number of a set of 8 cards (out of 100), bearing the last postmarks of the 2nd Millennium taken in Gozo at all Branch Post Offices and Sub Post Offices. The price is at LM2.50 for members and LM4.00 for non-members per set.

ADVERT 2

The Gozo Philatelic Society has also for sale a limited number of a set of 2 cards in colour (out of 250). These bear the special rubber hand postmark, dated 28th October 1998 taken in Victoria Gozo, to commemorate the 2000 years since the French surrendered in Gozo after 141 days of occupation. The price is at LM1.00 for members and LM2.00 for non-members.

ADVERT 3

Stockbooks with both local and foreign stamps are being circulated among members. Anyone interested to buy or just have a look at these stamps may contact Mr Anthony Grech. These are being sold at a relatively cheap price.

FIRST DAY COVERS
 issued by MALTAPOST
 during YEAR 2000

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>DATE OF ISSUE</u>
1. Greetings 2000	9th February 2000
2. Malta In The 20th Century	7th March 2000
3. Sport - Malta Football Association 1900-2000	28th March 2000
4. Sport - XXVII Sydney Olympics	28th March 2000
5. Europe 2000	9th May 2000
6. Air Transport 1900-2000	28th June 2000
7. Fireworks	19th July 2000
8. Definitive 2000 <i>Part Two</i>	13th September 2000
9. Children's Designs	18th October 2000
10. Christmas	18th November 2000

COMPETITION

Open to Junior Members of the Gozo Philatelic Society

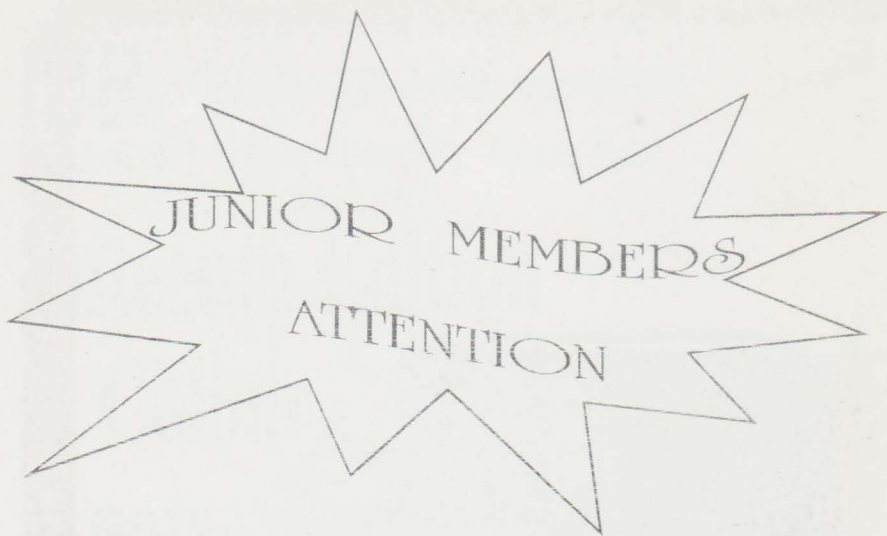
- i) *Name the first and last set which Maltapost issued during year 2000?*
- ii) *Give the date of issue of above sets.*
- iii) *How many sets did Maltapost issue this year?*
- iv) *This year Maltapost issued a set dedicated to children. When was it issued and who designed this set?*

Please send your answers on a separate paper, together with your name and address by not later than 31st December 2000 to:

The Secretary
Gozo Philatelic Society
P.O. Box 10, Victoria, Gozo. VCT 101.

Prizes to be won:

- 1st Prize: Stockbook with some stamps.
- Two consolation prizes - small empty stockbook.



*Introduce a new member to the
Gozo Philatelic Society
and you both receive
a pack of 50 stamps.*

MEMBERSHIP FEE: Only Lm1.00 yearly for Junior Members
Lm2.00 yearly for Senior Members

ENROLL NOW!

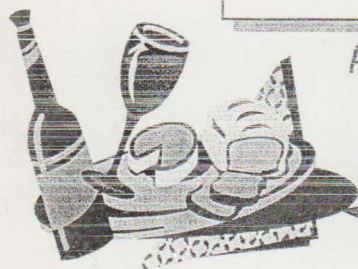
0002 75 04 21 100 100 100

SUNDAY LUNCH BUFFET

at

PALAZZO MARGHERITA

DUN LUQA STREET, SANNAT, GOZO.



ALL YOU CAN EAT FOR ONLY

LM4.50

Vat Included

**Children :Lm3.00
(5-10years)**



* ENJOY OUR DELICIOUS HORS D'OEUVRE TABLE AND HOME MADE SOUP



* CHOOSE FROM A SELECTION OF PASTA AND HOT BUFFET



* SPOIL YOURSELF FROM OUR MOUTH WATERING SELECTION OF SWEETS FROM THE TROLLEY

BOOKINGS ARE NOW OPEN FOR CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS LUNCH BUFFETS AND FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA DINNER DANCE.
FOR RESERVATIONS PHONE 555737 OR 557898



The JB Catalogue of Malta Stamps and Postal History

Published by Sliema Stamp Shop Publishers

91 Manwel Dimech Str - Sliema - Malta

Fifteenth Edition in Colour is now on sale



- **Malta** Lm 4.50
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