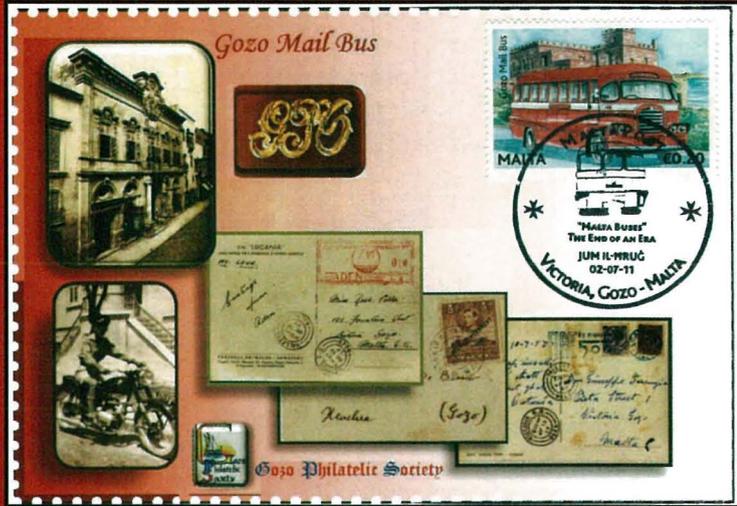




July – September 2011

No. 45 - 3/2011

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## EcoGozo-funded Book

When the “Funding Scheme for Projects by NGOs contributing towards the implementation of eco-Gozo short-term measures (2010-2012)” was announced late last year, the GPS Committee decided to propose a book based on the positive experience of the “Promoting Gozo through Philately” series which has been appearing in our newsletter since issue 23 (January-March 2006). In fact the same name was given to our project: a 64-pager illustrated in full colour. In our application we emphasized tourist aspects included within the official list of “Proposed Action”.

As soon as we received confirmation from the Gozo Ministry’s EcoGozo Directorate that ours was among those chosen, we set up an *ad-hoc* sub-committee which had its first meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011. The basic format was immediately agreed and the material began being collected; detailed quotations were also invited from printers and a Media Release issued a couple of days later. We aim at producing an attractive publication which contains a lot of interesting information about a wide range of aspects. The book will emphasize Nature & Culture on the cover since we feel that Gozo offers these in abundance – and Malta’s stamps have often featured them prominently. As far as the design is concerned, it is being left to the experienced hands of our Anthony Grech.

President Anton Said and Secretary Antoine Vassallo signed the official agreement at a ceremony in the Ministry Hall (exactly where we set up our annual Exhibition) presided by Minister Giovanna Debono. The other signatories were Ministry Permanent Secretary Joseph Scerri and EcoGozo Director Anthony Zammit. (Photo on page 2)

The original time-frames have unfortunately slid forward (due to various reasons, not least the fact that a substantial number of NGOs applied) but there should be no problem to achieve our aim of launching “The Island of Joy on Stamps” at the GPS Exhibition this November.



**Eco-Gozo – A Better Gozo**

*Action Plan 2010 - 2012*

Project part-financed by the Ministry for Gozo

**[www.eco-gozo.com](http://www.eco-gozo.com)**

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

*First issued on 12 February 2000*

*Editor: Austin Masini*

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

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

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**GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY**

***Founded on 3 September 1999***

For "the promotion of the hobby"

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

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

*email address: editor@stamps-gozo.org*

## GPS DIARY (44)

*Antoine Vassallo (Secretary)*

- 20 May 2011:** Committee takes basic decisions about EcoGozo book and forms *ad hoc* subcommittee. (see inside back cover)
- 2 June 2011:** First meeting of EcoGozo subcommittee.
- 3-5 June 2011:** Exhibition set up at Folklore Museum during *Lejlet Lapsi*; extended due to interest.
- 10 June 2011:** Committee meeting which concludes distribution of duties connected with EcoGozo book.
- 21 June 2011:** President and Secretary for signing ceremony regarding EcoGozo NGO scheme (in **photo** with Ministry Permanent Secretary J Scerri, Minister G Debono and Director A Zammit),
- 1 July 2011:** Eco Gozo subcommittee begins editing of material for book.
- 2 July 2011:** Anthony Grech prepares two covers for the Buses set.
- 13 July 2011:** Philately group opens at *Skola Sajf* Don Bosco Club.
- 22 July 2011:** Committee confirms format of Eco-Gozo book. (photo below)

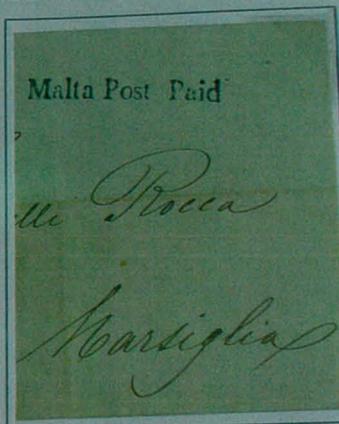


## Australian MALTA (20)

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

### Malta Post Paid

Handstamps were used to indicate that postage had been prepaid and the first one, "Malta \*P Paid", appeared in 1828. A series of straight line handstamps reading "Malta Post Office" appeared in the early 1830's. These were replaced in 1828 with the first circular date stamp. These continued in various forms from that date on. "Malta" formed part of the circumference of the early ones, whereas, in later handstamps the word "Malta" was inside the circle.



2 examples with two different "Malta Post Paid" series from 1838 and 1840. The space between post and paid is much bigger on the second example. This example has a line above the marking. It is uncertain if varieties showing the absence or presence of such lines are true varieties or due to the difference in inking, paper type or



An example of the handstamp with the word "MALTA" forming part of the circle. This example is dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 1848 (The Malta Study Circle's Handbook gives the earliest date of this handstamp as 1<sup>st</sup> August 1848!).

## The Sperati Story

(Hans Katzensteiner)

This is a true story about a forger of stamps. His work was like no other, in both art and fraud. This is a dramatic story about a maniac whose perfectionism motivated him towards the best philatelic forgeries. This is a strange story about a man who had to defend himself against the charge that his fakes were authentic stamps.



Jean de Sperati was born with the family surname of Desperati on 14 October 1884 in Pistoia near Florence: the fourth son of a retired member of the Italian army, he was called Giovanni. His eldest brother Mariano was a stamp dealer; another brother, Massimo, was a photographer.

Giovanni attended the technical high school in Bologna, with chemistry being a particular area of interest. At fifteen he bought a twelve-volume encyclopaedia, spending all his money. The practical use of contact prints and heliography in Massimo's shop gave him great experience. Another lucky circumstance for his later career was his cousin's paper mill, where he worked during school holidays: here he learned all the steps of paper production.

Giovanni's determination and intelligence, his technical talent and his artistic vein were already there when still at school: he successfully forged teachers' signatures! He could have chosen a respectable way towards glory and richness but he chose another path.

### **the beginning of a fantastic forging career**

Under the trade name of *Borsa Filatelica Toscana*, Giovanni (partnered by both Mariano and Massimo) began dealing (1908-9) in San Marino counterfeit stamps – very successfully! But their activities were discovered and Giovanni migrated to Paris, employed by his brother in his photo shop. The court case started in

1910, at first in Pisa but later in Lucca. He was finally found innocent, because of the argument that his stamps were sold at about 80% under the normal price.

Giovanni (with the adopted French name of Jean de Sperati) stayed in Paris: not to come into conflict with Italian law, but also because French law then accepted forged stamps if marked as counterfeit. During the day he earned his living as a travelling salesman; during the night he improved the reproduction technology. His little works becoming more and more perfect.

In 1910 one of his brother's clients told him to show one of his counterfeit stamps to Max Thier, one of the best examiners. They attested that the stamps are original and not faked! It was the first time that Sperati was able to mislead such an expert.



This stamp was the first of 234 which Sperati saved in his golden book or *Livre d'Or*. It was a collection of counterfeit stamps with authenticity certificates from high-ranking experts. During his stay in Paris and Lyon (to where he later moved) Sperati signed his stamps with a very soft pencil, well knowing that anyone could cancel this signature.

In 1930 Sperati moved with his wife and daughter to a small house in Aix-les-Bains and later to a big villa (*Villa Clair*). He stayed in this villa up to 1957, having installed there a forger's workshop: his art atelier.

### dark clouds

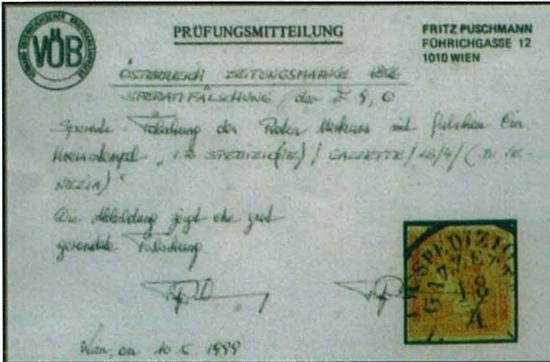
Sperati's works became very well-known by stamp dealers all over Europe. Trouble started around 1932: during an auction in London, British Philatelic Association experts declared as forgeries a big number of classical stamps. Following research, the BPA found out that all these counterfeits were coming from one source: Jean de Sperati.

But Sperati was lucky: the BPA Chairman (F.Stainly) decided to hold the matter secret, not to disrupt the philatelic world. This is

understandable but it allowed Sperati to continue bringing counterfeit stamps on the market.

### on trial

In February 1942 (during WWII), Sperati sent a registered



letter to Lisbon with 18 counterfeit stamps. Their value was declared as FF40100; the customs found out that there was a difference from the catalogue price of

FF223400. They confiscated the letter and Sperati was reported to the police for tax evasion and breaking export laws. Sperati felt confident that the French law which allowed him to make stamp reproductions would protect him: his argument was that stamps with such a low price are necessarily reproductions and not originals.

But, sensationally, the expert (Dr Edmond Locard) declared the stamps as authentic! In spite of Sperati's objection, the second Locard certificate (4.1.1944) reasoned why the stamps were surely authentic:

1. The size of the stamps is exactly as the original, with not even one tenth of a millimetre difference;
2. The colour, checked out with a quartz lamp, is the same as the original ones;
3. The consistency of the paper was perfect and the difference in thickness was not even a thousandth of the original one (Sperati had in fact used authentic samples from his cousin's paper mill);
4. The watermarks are exactly the same as the authentic ones;
5. Being impossible to imitate the gum mixture, the gum on any stamp doubtlessly shows the characteristic of the country of origin;

6. Since it is difficult to produce perforating machinery and hand perforations are easily identified, the perforation was sure evidence of the authenticity of the stamps.

### triumph and defeat

This was a triumph for the genius of Sperati (two experts declaring the stamps as authentic) but the trial resulted in a financial disaster for him. He offered the authorities to produce again the so-called authentic stamps, to prove his innocence. He was found guilty in April 1944 and he had to pay a fine of FF67477.

Sperati entered an appeal, the court engaging three experts. One of them was Aime Brun (a stamp dealer from Paris) who was well-informed about Sperati's technique. However all three experts refused. Finally, in January 1948, Leon Dubus declared all stamps as fake. Although finding him not guilty, Sperati had to pay a fine of FF5000, together with FF20000 for tax evasion.

For a time Sperati was able to hide but, when found, he gave all his stamps to his sister-in-law Anna Corn for future selling. The unavoidable happened when the union of French stamp dealers accused the Speratis of not declaring stamp reproductions as such.

This case was quite different from the other court case, because now the stamps were being sold as authentic material. Jean de Sperati was found guilty and condemned to one year in prison. He was fined FF10000, together with a FF300000 expiation fee. His wife and his sister in law were also found guilty, receiving a four month prison sentence. In a second court case, the court increased Jean's punishment to two years and FF500000.



### after the conviction

For health reasons, Jean de Sperati was freed. Robson Lowe (British Philatelic Association Chairman) tried to buy all his assets and forced him to sign a contract to stop the forgeries so as not to harm the market. Sperati agreed and sold his stamps (and equipment) for an enormous sum to the BPA; all imitations were so marked on the rear. The contract also specified that he had to write down the secret of his technology. BPA had to write a publication about Sperati's life (issued as "Robson Lowe: The Work of Jean de Sperati").



In spite of the BPA contract, he had not sold all his stock and in fact continued to counterfeit stamps. His daughter Yvonne bought all stamps on the market and a Grenoble lawyer bought all existing copies to

donate to the Paris postal museum.

Jean de Sperati died on 26 April 1957 and is buried in Aix-les-Bains.

### Conclusion

Sperati was a genius: his counterfeits can be considered as works of art. He touched around one hundred countries, including Malta. MaltaPost has just managed to acquire three Sperati forgeries in die proof form of the Queen Victoria Halfpenny. It can be noted that the Grosvenor Auction starting bid for one of these forgeries was £1500!

However, while respecting the quality of his handwork, one has to admit that Sperati's story is criminal and that he did harm the philatelic market.

References:

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- *British Philatelic Association: The work of Jean de Sperati Part I: the text (London 2ed 1959); Part II: the plates (London 1955)*
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## CHEV. EMVIN CREMONA

*Erica Dingli*

Emmanuele Vincenzo Cremona was born in Valletta, the capital city, on 27 May 1919.



Emvin Cremona (1919-1987)

Since his early years, Cremona was fascinated with colours and he used to experiment with mixing them. A big setback in Cremona's youth was that none of his ancestors were interested in art and his father was not so keen on his son's interest in painting. But when his father emigrated, Maria Assunta, his

mother reserved a corner in the house balcony where young Cremona could paint to his heart delight. This was to serve as his first Art Studio until at last in 1935 Emvin began to study art with other students that eventually would become established artists, like Anton Inglott, Esprit Barthet and Willie Apap. Cremona was indeed lucky to have among his teachers two great artists, Karmenu Mangion and Edward Caruana Dingli.

In 1937 he came third in a competition for a scholarship in the Accademia di Belle Arti of Rome. The next year, 1938, Cremona went to this renowned art school in Rome and began his studies.

The friendship between Cremona and Anton Inglott prospered and at the beginning of the Second World War they were still studying at the Accademia di Belle Arti. At the outbreak of the war, Cremona and Inglott were forced to abandon their studies and return to Malta. Cremona was conscripted by the armed forces in The King's Own Malta Regiment and was sent to supervise the restoration of paintings which had connections with the English military. After the war, Emvin Cremona continued his studies in London, at the Slade School College under Professor Randolph Schwabe. He returned to Malta in 1948 and in that same year Cremona became Head of the Government Art School. Now with a steady income Emvin Cremona got married to Lilien

nee Gatt in the same year. From their marriage Lilien bore Emvin four children; Marco, Anna Maria, Silvana and Nadya.

But the year 1948 apart from happiness brought along sadness as well to Cremona. His old friend and school mate Anton Inglott died. Just before his death, Inglott was painting the ceiling of St Joseph Church in Msida. Considering the friendship and the fact that Cremona and Inglott studied together in the same school, the choice of Cremona to continue Inglott's work in the Msida church was automatic.



This was the first religious work carried out by Cremona and from then on more religious work went Cremona's way. These include the ceiling painting of St Publius Church in Floriana and San Gajetan Church in Hamrun. He painted the dome of Maria Annunziata church in Hal Balzan and was even commissioned to paint the ceiling of the same church but unfortunately he did not finish such work. In fact this was completed a few years ago by the Gozitan artist Chev. Paul Camilleri Cauchi. Other religious works of art include paintings in the Parish Church of Hal Ghaxaq where

Cremona did a lot of work on the ceiling, dome and naves. Apart from this he has also other works in several churches around Malta. It is also worth noting that the United Nations Headquarters in New York and the World Health Organisation in Geneva boast of paintings by Chev. Cremona. In 1967 he was also commissioned with a painting that was later presented to Queen Elizabeth II.



He also did twenty paintings, which depict the life of Our Lady, which served as the original works of art on which the mosaics that now adorn Ta' Pinu Sanctuary in Gozo were subsequently commissioned.

Cremona took part also in various exhibitions both local and overseas.

Apart from religious work, Cremona left his mark in the graphic and philatelic area. One only has to mention that between 1957 and 1979, sixty seven sets of stamps were designed by him for the Maltese postal authorities. These sets are still very popular with stamp collectors around the world. Cremona's postage stamp designs raised the profile of Maltese Philately during a time of important political developments. His contribution commenced in 1957 with his unique design for a set of stamps commemorating the 15th anniversary of the award of the George Cross to the Maltese Islands. It closes



15th Anniv of the award of the George Cross



with his design for the 4th issue in the series of Flemish Tapestires. In 1961

Emvin was created a knight of the Order of Pope Saint Sylvester and in 1963 he was awarded the gold medal by the Society of Arts



Flemish Tapestires - Fourth and last issue

Manufacture and Commerce as recognition for his artistic contribution.

Emvin died on 29 January 1987 after a serious illness. He was known for his gentle manners with everyone, regardless of opinion or culture.

## PROMOTING GOZO THROUGH PHILATELY WINDMILLS IN GOZO

(continued from the previous issue)

(Anton F Attard)

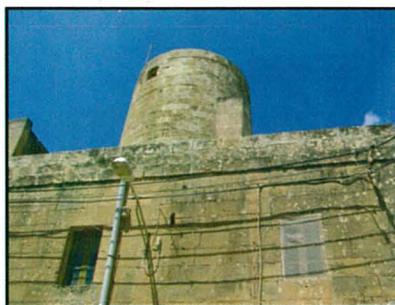


Ta' Manonu Windmill

Other windmills were privately owned. Here I would like to mention a particular one called “*Ta' Manonu*” at Ghajn Qatet Street, in Victoria, and the other one built at Zebbug in 1859 by Galent Vella at his own expense. The latter one is no longer extant.

Other windmills were the following: “*Tan-Nadur*” at Old Windmill Street, Nadur; “*Ta' Censu*” or “*Ta' Gnien Xibla*”, at Xaghra; “*Ta' Wara Sant' Wistin*”, in Rabat; “*Ta' Borom*” at Gharb; and “*Ta' Sannat*”, at Sannat, which afterwards was modified to serve as a limekiln. Windmills are popularly known after the miller who operated them or after the family that erected them.

The plan of a windmill was rather simple: a quadrangular building with a round tower on top of over 50 feet in height and with a diameter of 10 feet.



Ta' Wara Sant' Wistin Windmill

The building is accessible through an unusually small front door. As one enters one find oneself in an entrance hall with two lateral rooms – one room where the miller receives wheat and barley and the other where wheat and flour are stored.

At the back of the entrance hall there is another door leading to a place just under the round tower and from there one can climb

up to the top by some 50 or 52 steps. From the top one can enjoy a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside.

The machinery where wheat is ground is found just at the top of the round tower of the windmill. Here no detailed description is being given of this machinery as this would require a good amount of space and is rather superfluous for our purpose. Such a description could be seen in some other



Ta' Sannat Windmill

publication about windmills. We need only say that the machinery of the windmill and that of an animal-driven mill works on the same principle. There are two large round stones of volcanic rock, the lower one is fixed on the “*nasba*” and the upper one moves round either driven by an animal or by the wind, in case of the windmill. Wheat is thrown into a wooden funnel from where it goes down little by little between the two grinding stones to become wheat meal. Then it goes out from a small spout and is collected in a special sack tied to the spout. Lastly the wheat meal is then passed through special sieves to separate flour from bran and rough bran. But this last work is not done by the miller.

### The chiseller

Although the millstones were made of very hard stones, by wear and tear their surfaces became smoother and smoother and were rendered unsuitable for grinding wheat and barley. So the miller would call a special craftsman called *in-Nuqqax*, the chiseller, to scrape the surface of both millstones and make it harsh once again.

### The windmill and social life of bygone years

The miller used to live with his family in the inner rooms of

*continued page 22*

**stamp terms used in PHILATELY (35)**

(Emanuel Vella)

**New South Wales:** Former British Colony, now the south-eastern state of Australia, which had its own stamps from January 1850 to 1913, when they were replaced by those of Australia. The first issue was the famous “Sydney Views” much studied by specialists. The embossed stamped envelopes issued in Sydney in November 1838 for use in the local penny post, are claimed to be the world’s first prepaid postal stationary antedating the Mulreadies by 18 months. Stamps of New South Wales were used in Victoria until 1851 and in Queensland until 1860.



**Newspaper Keytype:** Gibbons identification for a Portuguese Colonial design, used for postage on journals and newspapers.

**Newspaper Stamps:** Special issues for prepaid postage on newspapers, journals, periodicals and printed matter, have been issued by many countries. Some of them combine news tax with postage and thus serve both as revenue and postage stamps.



**New York - USA:** In this American city the famous 'Post Office' postmaster stamps appeared in 1845 preceding the first US general issue by two years. Here too, in the 1842 - 50

period, stamps inscribed 'City Despatch Post' were issued for the official local delivery service. Numerous privately-operated postal services of various types formerly operated in the city and the state of New York. Many of these were still in use in the early 1880.

**Nezavisna Drzava:** Inscribed on stamps of Croatia in 1941-4 during the German occupation. Later it became part of Yugoslavia and now it is an independent country.

**Nicaria: Icaria:** Aegean island occupied and retained by Greece. It issued a set of stamps which were superseded by O/P issue of Greek stamps in 1913.

**NieuveGuinea:** Netherlands New Guinea.

**Nieuve Republiek:** New Republic - South Africa.

**Niger Coast Protectorate:** Former British protectorate in West Africa, originally known as the Oil Rivers Protectorate and now part of Nigeria. It had its own stamps from 1893 until they were superseded by those of Southern Nigeria in 1901.

**Nippon:** Japan

**Niuafuou Island:** One of the Tonga group. For a long time it used Tin-Can mail.



*Japanese Maple*

*(to be continued)*

**GUIDELINES FOR DISPLAYING  
PHILATELIC EXHIBITS -  
*especially with regards to GPS Exhibitions***

*(Jesmond Borg)*

When one decides to participate in a philatelic exhibition he should first be familiar with the regulations about the subject, so as to avoid mistakes done in previous exhibitions. He then should decide about the theme or subject chosen as juniors are let completely free in the choice of subject.



Certain guidelines for participants, both juniors and adults, are of the most importance.

The first consideration taken is about the presentation of the material regarding the theme or subject chosen. This should be well developed in a way that even a non philatelic observer may recognize and understand the connection and hence the meaning.

Secondly there should be a clear correlation between the written information and the philatelic material presented.

Thirdly the material exhibited should have a primary philatelic focus. Non philatelic items including postcards, photographs, maps, 'cinderellas', corner cards, adverts and covers may be used to a minimum. (if not in non-traditional classes.)

Fourthly - The condition of the material used, need not be perfect, but should be fine in the context of the subject or theme chosen.

Finally, the display should be neat and reflect the exhibitor's case in using this factor to an attractive presentation.

No restriction should be made for the use of colour in the material displayed as long as it is more helpful for the better understanding of the subject.

## PHILATELIC CENTENNIALS

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

3 – G&E appears (1911)

*(Antoine Vassallo)*

The **Gilbert and Ellice Islands** are groups of islands (whose composition changed during the years) covering quite a wide area of the Pacific Ocean which formally became a British protectorate in 1892 - with a Resident Commissioner

appointed the next year; the status was changed to a crown colony in 1916. These names commemorate Thomas Gilbert (a British captain who crossed the archipelago in 1788 on the return voyage from Australia) and Edward “the Bear”



Ellice (a British politician and merchant who owned the cargo on the ship whose captain sighted one of the groups in 1819). In 1976, the islands were divided into two different colonies;







textiles. In the Indian continent, even the flowers have numerous uses.

These first two G&E sets were followed the next year by the launch of new definitives, reverting to the George V standard type - inscribed GILBERT & ELLICE ISLANDS.



A new bi-coloured series began appearing in 1939, featuring local scenery (with George VI profile) - updated in 1956 with a profile of Elizabeth II.

It is interesting to finally note that New Zealand stamps were in fact used at the NZ Postal Agency on one of the islands (Fanning – or Tabuaeran) from 1902, while New South Wales had established an Office on Ocean Island.

## POST HASTE (14)

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

*(Antoine Vassallo)*

### **The largest (?)**

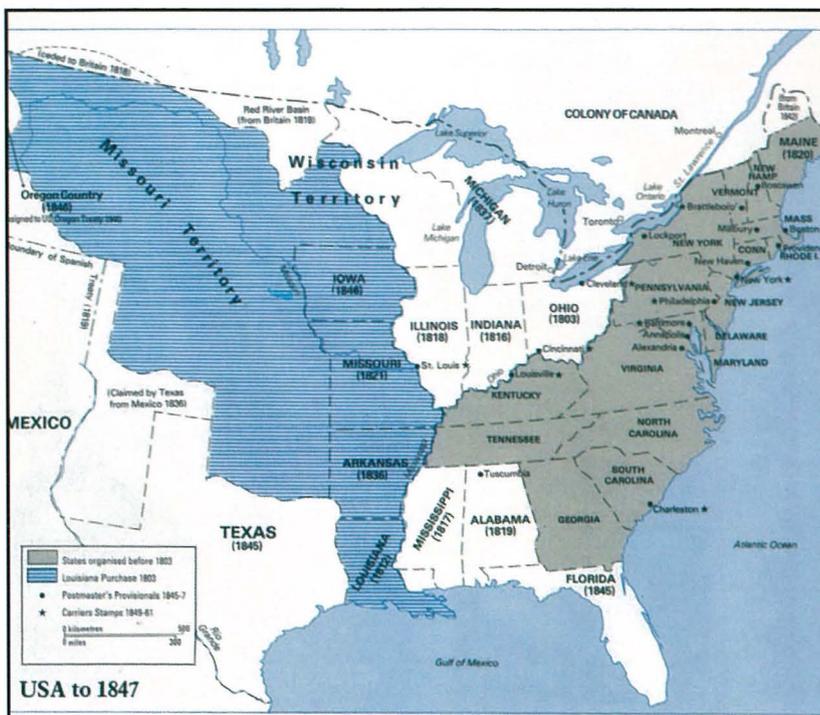
*“The United States Postal Service delivers more mail to more addresses in a larger geographical area than any other post in the world.” (usps.com 2010)*

### **(B) Progress**

The postal system in the **United States** progressed rapidly from the first decades of the nineteenth century. All steamboat routes were declared “post roads” in 1823, as happened for railroads in 1838. However the Eastern Pony Express still rode the Philadelphia-Mobile section of the mail service from New York to New Orleans.

A local private carrier in New York issued the first adhesive stamps on 1 February 1842 – unofficially. Postal rates were reformed into a simplified system on 1 July 1845 – leading a general adoption of adhesives. That year saw over fourteen thousand postoffices; the next year an independent system in Texas with a further hundred was absorbed too.

Various postmasters issued provisionals between 1845 and 1847, when the US government stamps appeared. These were made available in thirty states, besides other territories. And the 1849 discovery of gold started a rush to the West.



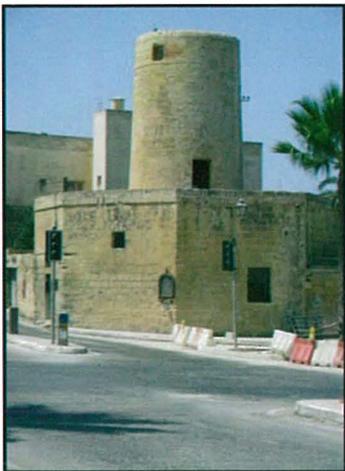
with acknowledgements to Rossiter & Flower's Stamp Atlas

## for your ATTENTION !!

Mr Louis Attard - a GPS member would like to buy First Day Covers dating back before 1964 i.e. *before Independence*. Anyone interested can contact the above mentioned directly on Mobile No 79055012

continued from page 13

the ground floor and in the other rooms at first floor. Very often in the vicinity of the windmill there would be found the stable and shed for the beast of burden and cart of the miller.



The Windmill at Xewkija

The Xewkija windmill is a special one. It is not only found in a very central position on the main Mgarr/Vitoria road, but has also a special plan, that of an octagon, in lieu of the usual quadrangular shape. Each of the eight sides looks towards the eight points of the main wind directions: North, South, East and West, and Northwest, Northeast, Southeast and Southwest.

Regarding “*Ta’ Borom*” windmill at Għarb we heard a rather funny anecdote. When the wind rose, a man used to climb up on the roof of the windmill to sound his “*bronja*”, a large cowrie used as a trumpet, to inform people that in view of good weather the windmill will be operating and therefore they could bring their sacks of wheat to be ground. When this man was blowing the cowrie someone released the windmill’s brake and it suddenly started turning round. It hit the cowrie man and literally ‘sowed’ him among the prickly pear trees growing near the windmill!

On another occasion a man went to the miller Galent Vella of Zebbug to grind his wheat. It was an unusually calm day. “My friend,” said Galent, “tell the wind to rise and I will grind it for you.” Although the wind is much stronger than animals, one cannot make it rise as one pleases!

Today Galent’s windmill has been demolished and no longer exists. The six antennae of our windmills have almost all disappeared, destroyed during the days of bad winter windy weather. The one at Saint George’s Fief still has “*il-barjol*”, or that part resembling a small dome which fortunately has not been removed from its place.

Windmills, like churches and street niches, were landmarks which also very often gave their names to the streets where they were situated: Windmill Street, Old Windmill Street.

The windmill was also mentioned in an old folk rhyme:

*Seba' hatbiet fiha l-mithna,  
'k jigi r-rih ma jdawwarhiex,  
u x-xebba 'k ma tkunx sabiha  
il-guvni ma jehodhiex.*

**Seven sticks has the windmill  
If wind comes, it won't give her life,  
And if the young maiden is not beautiful,  
The young man won't take her as his wife.**

Why are seven sticks mentioned instead of six? Maybe the seventh stick is the big axle of the windmill!

### **The windmills' heyday comes to an end**

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century Malta and Gozo saw the first modern flour mills driven by steam or fuel oil. These flour mills were more sophisticated and efficient than the windmills driven by animals or the wind. In 1880, a certain business-man, Mr Francesco Galea, known as "*Is-Sur Ċikk ta' l-Erbgħa*" established the first Flour Mills at St. Anthony's Street, Imġarr. Ten years later, in 1890, he purposely built the Pax Flour Mills at *Strada Corsa*, Racecourse Street (now Fortunato Mizzi Street), Victoria. In this building he installed large flour mills that at first were driven by a steam engine, but later on this engine was substituted by a modern diesel engine.

Around the year 1920, three men from Malta, named John, Spiridione and Vincent Vella, established another Flour Mill at the village of Għarb at No. 93, *Strada Chiesa*, Church Street, Fgura, at Għarb. They chose these villages where to settle because it was surrounded by a countryside where wheat and barley were grown.

At the same time these same three men, the Vella Brothers, known as "*Tal-Magna*" started building another Flour Mill at Victoria, just opposite the Villa Rundle Gardens. This Flour Mill

started operation around the year 1921. In 1929, a certain Michael Portelli, a blacksmith, erected a building close to the house where the Vella brothers had their Flour Mill. Portelli acquired the machinery from the Vella Brothers and brought another machine from Ipswich, England. These two machines continued to be operated by Joseph son of Michael Portelli up to 1940 when, due to lack of fuel because of the Second World War they had to stop operations.



Mr Karlu Galea  
with two of his workers



During the War some old animal-driven flourmills were resuscitated and were operated secretly. Gozitan-produced wheat and barley were ground clandestinely the old way.

I now mention one last thing as a curiosity. In 1965, a certain Fakond Cauchi of 137 Triq il-Blata, Għarb, started to operate an electrical machine. Many people, especially foreign settlers used to go to him and they used to be served after a few minutes.

The building of the Pax Flour Mills was demolished in October 1991 and so it vanished from our sight after it had been standing for a whole century.

Nowadays, Gozitan needs with regard to flour and other animal fodder is brought ready made from Malta where big flour mills are to be

found that cater for all the nation's needs and requirements.

*Photos: With the courtesy of Mr George Meilak & family Galea*

*Windmill Photos: With acknowledgement of Mr George Camilleri*

## FOR SALE

- Capitulation of the French Special hand stamp cards (set of 2).  
Limited Edition of 500 cards. € 2.50
- A commemorative Registered Cover from Victoria Gozo Post Office to commemorate two Gozitan Patriots namely:-Sir Adrian Dingli & Arch Saverio Cassar.  
Limited Edition of 100 covers. **(Less than 10 left).** € 4.50
- A Commemorative Card showing Guzeppi Grech known as Zeppu Kola, the last owner of the Xaghra Windmill doing maintenance work. Limited edition of 200 cards. € 2.50
- Card to commemorate the 7th Gozo Philatelic Exhibition (3 to 12 November 2006) including the 8c Christmas stamp and cancelled with the Christmas First Day of Issue hand stamp  
Limited Edition of 100 cards. **(Less than 10 left).** € 1.50
- Special card issued on the occasion of the TOY STAMP issue. Cancelled on the first day of issue at Xaghra Post Office featuring the “POMSKIZILLIOUS MUSEUM OF TOYS” found in Xaghra Gozo.  
Limited Edition of 75 cards. € 1.75
- Special “In Memory” card hand stamped at Gharb Sub Post Office on the occasion of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist held at Ta’ Pinu Shrine, for the repose of the soul and in memory of Mr Anthony Fenech, a great philatelist and a sincere friend of the Gozo Philatelic Society.  
Limited edition of 160 cards. € 1.75
- Card in the form of a First Day Cover on the issue of the re-printed 1c stamp depicting the *Sempreviva* of Gozo. This stamp was officially issued in Gozo later than in Malta. (19.10.2006).  
Limited edition of 160 cards. € 0.50
- Registered cover commemorating the issue of the Comino Tower stamp. Postmarked with the First day of issue handstamp from Ghajnsielem S.P.O.  
Limited edition of 75 covers. **(Less than 10 left).** € 2.50

## FOR SALE

- Cover issued on the occasion of the 2005 Christmas set stamp issue with a personalized stamp of Chev. Paul Camilleri Cauchi - the stamp set designer. These covers are individually signed by the artist himself. Limited Edition of 130 covers. € 2.50
- Card to commemorate the 50 years of Europe. Cancelled with the special handstamp issued for the occasion during the festivities held at Nadur Gozo. Limited edition of 75 cards. € 2.50
- Registered Hand Coloured cover to commemorate the issue of two stamps depicting Gozo Balconies (one at Victoria and the other at Gharb). The covers were hand stamped with the First Day of issue Post-Mark. Limited edition of 75 covers. € 2.50
- Card commemorating the GPS 8th Annual Exh. 2007 and the launching of the GPS website. Limited edition of 100 cards. € 1.50
- Set of two cards with first day of operation hand-stamp of the new Post Offices at Xlendi and St Lawrence. Limited edition of 75 cards each. € 2.50
- Card commemorating the 125 Anniv from the Call of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu to Karmni Grima and Frangisk Portelli. Each card is cancelled with a special handstamp issued by MaltaPost and stamped at the National shrine on Sunday 22 June 2008. The card has an embossed metal image of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu. Limited edition of 1000. **(Only 10 left)**. € 3.00
- Card commemorating 5th Gozo Philatelic Exhibition and 5th Anniversary of the GPS. Limited edition of 400 cards. **(Less than 10 left)**. € 1.50
- Set of 2 registered covers commemorating Karolina Cauchi and Patri Manwel Magri (Gozo Benefactors). Limited edition of 30 covers. **(Less than 5 left)**. € 5.00
- Card commemorating the 9th GPC Exhibition. Limited edition of 100 cards. **(Less than 10 left)**. € 1.50
- Card commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Gozo Tourism Association. Limited edition of 75 cards. € 2.00

**NB: Each Card or Cover is individually numbered.**

- Malta stamps in mint condition are also available at 2/3 catalogue price.

*Those interested may contact:*  
Mr Anthony Grech on Tel No. 21553338

## 2011 PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

This year's annual philatelic exhibition is envisaged to take place between the second and third week of November, i.e. from 11 to 20 November 2011 at the Exhibition Hall St Francis Square Victoria Gozo

The title chosen for this year's event is  
**“Nature and Nurture”**. (to take care).

This occasion has become quite popular both with local philatelists and quite amazingly also with foreign ones.

Application Form is enclosed with this issue.

### Members' Meetings

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

**September 4, October 2, November 6 and December 4**

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*



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

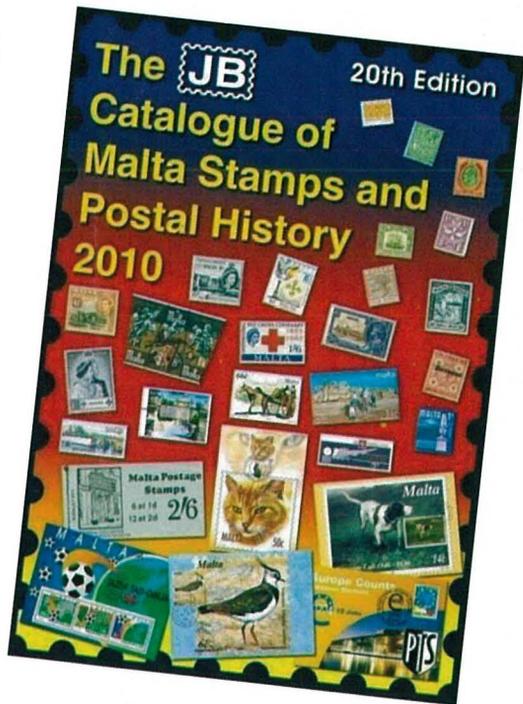
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