



*Grand Priory of the Maltese Islands*  
*Military & Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem*

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## *Philatelic items related to the Order*

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If the writer Coleridge is to be believed, the origins of postage stamps dates to 1836 after Rowland Hill published a pamphlet entitled *Post Office Reform: Its Importance and Practicability*. Hill proposed that inland letters should be subject to a prepaid postage. The results of this reform were that on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1840 small pieces of paper with gum on one side and an effigy of the Queen Victoria on the other, were sold at post office counters for the very first time. The sale received very favourable public reaction. These were the stamps—penny blacks and two-penny blues—for prepayment of postage. Postage stamps were subsequently introduced in other countries. Stamp collecting has had a following ever since 1841. The first known collector was Doctor Gray, an official at the British Museum, who placed an announcement in *The Times* in 1841, stating that he was looking for stamps. As the number of collectors grew, and it became more difficult to obtain certain issues, such as first issues from each country, interest grew in the hobby. By 1860 there were stamp collectors in society's most notable circles.

The Order of St. Lazarus has never assumed a sovereign status and hence has never undertaken the onus of issuing prepaid postage stamps—unlike the Order of St. John who have been issuing their own stamp issues since 1966. Indirect philatelic reference to the Order of St. Lazarus was made in an undated postcard issued in Capua, Italy. This features the old Church and Hospital of St. Lazarus, the statue of St. Lazarus and a depiction of a Lazarite knight.



**Postcard – Capua, Italy - undated**

The various jurisdictions of the Order of St. Lazarus have in recent years featured or issued philatelic items as commemorative or fund-raising endeavours.

The earliest identified commemorative stamp dates to 1998 issued by the jurisdiction in the Czech Republic [Malta Obedience] on the occasion of the 900-year existence of the Order.



**Czech Republic, 1998**

This was soon followed by another commemorative stamp issued in 1999 to commemorate the Grand Magistral Council Meeting [Malta Obedience] held in St.

Poelten, Austria. A special postal rubber stamp was also used by the Austrian Postal Agency. Two rubber stamps were used each distinguished by the numbers 1 and 2.



**Austrian Republic, 1999**

The Australian jurisdiction also issued private-issued official valid €0.55 stamp



**Austrian Republic, undated [after 2002]**

Another undated commemorative stamps were issued by the American Jurisdiction who issued a private-issue official valid 39c stamp in the United States of America.



**United States of America, undated**

A special stamp “Hospital for Armenia” was issued in 2003 by the Hospitallers of Saint-Lazarus [Paris Obedience] as a fund-raising endeavour in order to provide a medical structure in Armenia. A re-issue was made in 2006.



**Hospital for Armenia issues – 2003/2006**

A similar fund-raising philatelic endeavour in support of charitable activities was initiated by the Grand Priory of Finland.



**Finland, undated**

Another stamp was issued by the Order of Saint Lazarus in 2005 by to commemorate Chevalier Nicolas Roze b.25/9/1675; d.2/9/1733. In 1702, Roze participated in the War of Spanish Succession and fought in the defence of Alicante against the Bavarians and on the Battle of Almanza. Wounded and taken prisoner, he returned to Marseille in 1707. His military exploits earned him the knighthood of St. Lazarus.



**Chev. Roze issue - 2005**

A new stamp related to the Order of St. Lazarus has been prepared as a fund-raising project by the Grand Priory of Portugal and Africa in 2009. This depicts the 40<sup>th</sup> Grandmaster of the Order Philippe de Courcillon in all his 18<sup>th</sup> century regalia as depicted in a portrait dated 1702 [artist: Hyacinthe Rigaud] now held in the Chateau de Versailles, France.



**Portugal, 2009**

The Grand Priory of the Maltese Islands has also prepared a number of commemorative philatelic items. In November 2006, the Grand Priory [then a Splinter group of Malta Obedience] commissioned two private-issue official stamps from MaltaPost Ltd to commemorate the International Investiture & Supreme Council Meeting held in Malta. The two stamps depict H.E. Michel le Tellier who served as Vicar general with grand magisterial privileges during 1673-1691 and H.E. Chev. Reginald

Saviour Richard Attard who served as Grand Vicar and President of the Supreme Council of the splinter group of the Malta Obedience during 2004-2006.



**Malta, 2006**

Another two private-issue official stamps were commissioned from MaltaPost Ltd to commemorate the September 2008 Chapter General Meeting and the Installation of the 49<sup>th</sup> Grandmaster held in Manchester. The two dedicated stamps depict last two Grandmasters of the Order – H.H. Francesco de Paula de Borbon y Escasany [serving during 1996-2008] and H.E. Carlos Gereda de Borbon [elected 2008].



**Malta, 2008**