As mentioned, in the previous newsletter, my continued thanks to member Irv Osterer from Canada, for his valued input in re-designing the newsletter, with the layout and illustrations.

At the same time, may I take the opportunity of thanking all the members that contribute articles and information to this newsletter. The more input that I receive from members, then the more interesting the newsletter becomes.

Members are requested to ensure, that their computers and anti-virus software, can accept PDF files and that their email preferences are set correctly.

***********************************************************

RARE "JUDAICA RELATED" ISSUE FROM G.B. (ROYAL MAIL / BRITISH POST OFFICE)
BY GARY GOODMAN

I am most grateful to member John Embrey, for informing me of a "new issue" by Royal Mail, (British Post Office) which seems to have got completely overlooked.

On 28th. October 2010, Royal Mail issued one of their generic sheets, titled Remembrance – The National Arboretum.

This was not classed as a new issue, as the 10 x 1st. class stamps on the sheet was the standard Poppy stamp which has been out for some time. However, attached to these stamps were a label, each depicting a monument from the Arboretum, which is the National Centre for Remembrance.

One of these labels is Judaica related as it depicts a memorial with the Star of David – which is the main feature of this label. The wording on the top of the label reads:
"Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Woman”.

As Royal Mail do not class this as a new issue, for the reason as stated above, collectors were unaware of this issue, until after it came out, which was then too late to obtain covers with this stamp and label.

Also to add to the confusion, as it was not a new issue, there was no First Day Cover facilities available from the Philatelic Bureau.

However, it appears that Benham covers, did sponsor a Handstamp on the day the stamps were issued. (Although if you notice, in the handstamp it does not state First Day Of Issue).
I was in touch with The Stamp Centre in The Strand, London, T/A Steven Scott, who specialise in these type of covers and themes and the proprietor was totally unaware of this issue.

I am most grateful to member John Embrey who fortunately obtained the stamp and label on a generic Royal Mail First Day Cover, along with the Benham sponsored handstamp, which denotes The National Arboretum, Alrewas, Lichfield, Staffordshire.

I contacted the National Arboretum, but although they had for sale these complete sheets of stamps/labels, they were totally unaware of any cover or handstamp available.

Complete sheets were available last week from the Philatelic Bureau at £13.50 – Yet we must remember Royal Mail are making huge profits on this issue, as the face value of the stamps themselves only amounts to £4.10. However, for each sheet sold Royal Mail are making a donation to the National Memorial Arboretum.

I would be very interested to know how much of a donation per sheet they are giving. I would be very surprised if it is the same percentage that Royal Mail themselves are making!

Eitherway, this will be a very collectable sheetlet in the years to come – and more importantly so will be the Judaica label and stamp postmarked on cover.

***********************************************************

COMMENTS FROM MEMBER SONNY KOSKY

While not wishing to introduce politics into this journal, it is difficult not to make comments when the opportunity presents itself. The article in issue No.60 by Alan W. Benjamin titled PRO HAMAS BLOCKADE MAIL PLANNED shows again how anti-Israel propaganda has entered into every facet of the media.

Following Gary Goodman’s comment on the same article, I took a look at the labels produced. Whilst I cannot make out the title of the 1 value, the other two have anti-Israel images. The producer of these labels could easily have designed images appealing to people’s humanitarian feelings, but chose images designed to show obvious anti-Israel bias.

If the designer wants to support the Palestinians, why not just send them money, why spend time designing labels and trying to sell them on eBay. Likewise any fool buying them for the purpose of supporting the Palestinians would do better sending all their money to a Palestinian charity rather than wasting it on useless labels.

***********************************************************
PHILATELIC BUREAU RULES!

If these are still available from post offices in San Marino, I suppose you could buy them there. Might they be available also in Italy? If you know of someone visiting Italy on holiday or business and they are near San Marino, you could ask them to get you some – Just an idea!

HONG KONG CHARACTERISTIC STREETS ISSUE

A set of stamps, and an attractive miniature sheet has been issued by Hong Kong, with one stamp depicting Nathan Street.

This street was named after Sir Matthew Nathan, who was active in Jewish affairs. He was a British soldier and civil servant.

LEILA MOURAD
BY CLAUDE WAINSTAIN

When Leila Mourad passed away in a Cairo hospital, at the age of seventy-seven, in 1995, nobody noticed this pleasant and discreet old lady. But four years later, Egypt proved that it had not forgotten her by issuing a commemorative stamp to honour a performer that enchanted the entire Arabic world.

Leila grew in a Jewish family, and was influenced by her father, the renowned baritone, Zaki Mordekhai. At the age of fifteen, she sang for the first time at an official reception. The public’s enthusiasm for her magnificent voice and her beauty, was her chance to escape poverty. By the end of the thirties, she was noticed by Togo Misrahi, a Jewish director, who offered Leila her first role in a
full-length motion picture. Her natural charm delighted audiences throughout the Middle East. Her songs were popular on the radio within a few years, she was the best paid actress of the time. Her enormous musical and on-screen success totalled 1,200 songs and 28 movies between 1938 and 1951.

With great fame also came much scrutiny. The tabloids reported stories of her tumultuous love affair with the actor and producer Anouar Wagdi, from whom she divorced three times. There were also sensationalized reports of her personal wealth and serious allegations about her Jewish roots.

Leila converted to Islam in 1946 when she married the director Fatih Abdel Wahab, and though she had been chosen to galvanize the crowd during the official celebrations of the Revolution, in July, 1953, she was nicknamed "the foreigner" and many doubted her loyalty. The government of Syria claimed that she had donated 50,000 Egyptian pounds to Israel and banned her songs and her films from the public. Although Leila denied these accusations, this turn of events marked the end of her public life. When her former lover Anouar Wagdi died, she left the stage and lived the rest of her life as a recluse, refusing any photos, invitations or interviews.

When seeking an explanation for this sudden retreat from public life, at the height of her fame, at the age of thirty seven, there was some speculation that it may have had something to do with the consequences of a diplomatic manoeuvre that went sour. Nasser was involved in secret negotiations with Israel and, felt by choosing Leila to embody the Revolution, he was sending an indirect message, that the new Egypt did not foster any hostility towards the Jews. Unfortunately, Nasser's relations with the Jewish state remained hostile, and Leila was soon replaced by another popular diva.

Joseph Assouline, Leila Mourad's nephew reveals the real reasons of her decision to leave public life at only 37 years of age in a documentary he made about his famous aunt. He claims that she chose Greta Garbo's path, and wanted to stay forever, in the eyes of the Egyptian masses, the symbol of the eternal seduction.
POSTCARDS FROM THE HOLY LAND: A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE OTTOMAN ERA, 1880–1918, by Salo Aizenberg, with a foreword by Alan Dershowitz

This softbound 385 pp. all-color book, “provides the reader with a lavishly illustrated, meticulously documented, and superbly written view of Eretz Israel during a tumultuous generation of change and development” (Marty Zelenietz in a review, The Israel Philatelist, August 2010).

Aizenberg “uses contemporaneous postcards as visual documents to explore the land and people of Ottoman Palestine on the eve of First World War.”

The reviewer concludes: “I’m not sure if this coffee table book belongs on scholarly bookshelves, or a work of social history that will enhance any coffee table. That the book works well in either context is a tribute to the author’s writing, research, and collection.

“It belongs in the library of any collector of Judaica, Holy Land postal history, postcards, and students of Middle Eastern history.”

Available from Amazon.US is $40.00 (ppd); Canada and Mexico $50.00 (ppd), international $60.00 (ppd.).

Member Rabbi Isidoro Aizenberg's son has produced a book that many collectors may find of interest.

***********************************************************

HUNGARIAN ISSUE
REPORTED BY GENE EISEN

The Hungarian Postal Authority issued a stamp on January 26th. 2010 celebrating the 150th. anniversary of the birth of Izidor Kner. (1860–1935), who established an outstanding printing house in Gyoma, Hungary. An earlier stamp was issued by Hungary on September 23rd. 1982 in recognition of the centenary of the Kner printing house. (Scott 2756).

***********************************************************
HEBREW LETTERING ON FRENCH STAMP
BY GARY GOODMAN

France issued on September 8, 2010 a very attractive stamp depicting two children writing on a blackboard. Clearly visible on the blackboard, and on the stamp is the hebrew wording Limmud. The stamp was issued to commemorate the "150th ans de L'Alliance Israelite Universelle". A very attractive silk First Day Cover was available for this issue.

This issue along with all forthcoming issues mentioned in the newsletters are only available via myself on a standing order arrangement.

******************************************************************************

RABBIS ON STAMPS

The following very interesting link to the website – Rabbis on Stamps by Shnayer Leiman, Leiman Library was sent to me by Professor David Blumenthal. This will certainly be of interest to those that collect Rabbis on Stamps. http://www.jidaily.com/QFnl2

From the 2nd-century Joshua ben Hananiah to the current Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel: a preliminary gallery of 230 stamps. The collector's introduction is here <http://leimanlibrary.com/index.html>.
Azerbaidjan – souvenir sheet – April 20, 2010
Picture by Evgueny Khaldei (Red flag on the Reichstag), and a picture by Yakov Riumkin. (Soldiers with flags on the Reichstag).

Belarus – souvenir sheet – April 16, 2010
Picture by Yakov Riumkin. (Soldiers with flags on the Reichstag).

Jersey – August 3, 2010
Citroen 1938 car.

France – November 8, 2010
Red Cross – Souvenir sheet – (First Aid)
Designer – Marc Taraskoff.
To Judaica Thematic Society Members:

A few of you have had problems opening up the illustrations on the “new-look” newsletters.

Everyone should be able to open up a PDF file/attachment, which this is.

Or alternatively be able to download, the free ACROBAT READER file to open PDFs from the internet.

I’m afraid it looks as if I am not going to be able to please everyone.

The safest way to export the newsletter is by PDF. Theoretically every computer should be able to read it. Members should have a look at their e-mail preferences to accept PDF files. If you cannot open PDF files, you have bigger computer issues to deal with. It is a universal format, and almost all on-line instruction manuals now use this format.

It appears that members may have certain settings engaged on their machines for security purposes – and unless they know how to manage these things, there will be files that will not be viable.

I am still looking at alternative ways to publish – but it looks like the PDF format is the only option for the foreseeable future. This could have been solved by posting the newsletter on a member’s website – but as a majority of members objected to contributing/sponsoring a site, this is now a non-starter.

The only possibility is by publishing the Newsletter as a hard copy and sent via the postal system. But there would be a charge for this service, to cover all the overheads of printing it out on an ink jet printer, postal costs, and exchange rate costs.

This idea is very time consuming and is not a route that I really want to travel. My sincere apologies, if the above is not applicable to you, but I have sent this to all on the membership list.

Finally, I am always open and willing to discuss ideas with members – but I am now finding that the problems of distributing the newsletter are now taking up far too much time. I look forward to your comments and welcome your contributions in 2011.

Hag (Hanukkah) Sameah!

Gary