

Story of a Stamp 5: Philatelic Society of Egypt

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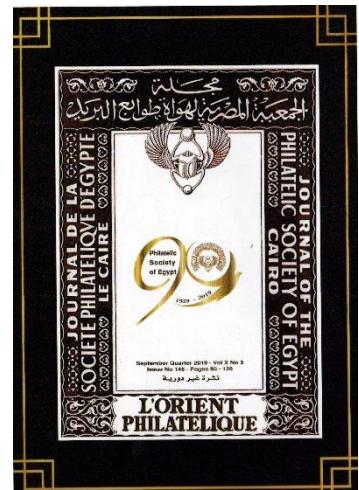
The Philatelic Society of Egypt (PSE) is one of the oldest of Egyptian civil societies, established in 1929, and an important member of both the European philatelic union (FEPA) and the International federation (FIP). It is currently headquartered downtown at 16 Abdel Khalek Tharwat Street, Cairo.



Behind its establishment was a group of Egyptians and foreigners united by their love for stamps. Their first publication was the *Journal of the Egyptian Philatelic Society*. It organised the first international stamp exhibition in Egypt in 1946, inaugurated by King Farouk, and in 1964 was officially registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs. It has about 300 members.

An attractive 20 millièmes stamp (SG 1389, left) was issued in 1979 to celebrate the 50th anniversary. The collector portrayed is examining an Egypt-Israel peace treaty stamp, issued some months earlier.

PSE is one of the most highly regarded philatelic organisations in the Arab world. For nearly a century it has been a hub for collectors, historians and enthusiasts dedicated to the study and preservation of Egypt's rich postal history. The society was established during a golden age of philately, when stamp collecting was gaining popularity worldwide. Egypt's unique blend of ancient civilisation and modern reform offered a fascinating narrative—from the early Posta Europea service to the stamps of the Khedivate, Kingdom and Republic. Its founding members envisioned a society to promote research and education, organise exhibitions and events, publish authoritative catalogues and journals and foster international collaboration.



Over the decades it has been led by many distinguished philatelists, including:

- Ibrahim Chaftar Bey, the first Egyptian to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. He organised the 1946 exhibition, which was attended by King Farouk, a passionate collector;
- Ahmed Mazloum Pasha, a judge and editor of *L'Orient Philatélique*, the society's journal (above), which continues to this day;
- Mehanny Eid: A postal official who compiled classic but now outdated Zeheri catalogues of Egypt, UAR and Sudan, including the last in 1972.



In recent years, Hany Salam, a respected researcher and collector, has served as President, bringing renewed energy and scholarship to the society. The society has hosted numerous exhibitions, both national and international, showcasing Egypt's postal treasures, attracting collectors worldwide and helping to position Egypt as a key player in the philatelic world.

In 2019 the PSE celebrated its 90th anniversary, marked by a £E5 stamp (left) and an exhibition highlighting its enduring legacy. Last year I was privileged to attend a Saturday auction at the Cairo HQ. Whether you're a seasoned collector or a curious newcomer, the PSE offers a welcoming space to explore the stories behind Egypt's stamps. See its Facebook page at facebook.com/groups/412941905431721