



Museum Launches Stamp Collection

On Friday September 6 the Museum launched its permanent stamp collection featuring:

- The history of Egypt's postal system from the first stamp that was issued in 1866 to 1953; and
- A selection of stunning gold leaf stamps from a Collector's Catalogue of stamps issued by the British Museum on the "Treasures of Tutankhamun" 1972 exhibition.

The goal of the exhibition is to display a continuity of the theme of stamps from the earliest stamps issued between 1866 and 1906 to the end of the Mohammed Ali dynasty (1952) — included is a selection of stamps celebrating the anniversary of the postal system.

Quite apart their postal value and purpose, stamps are also communication "tools": the imagery or overprints on the Egyptian stamps reflect the country's identity and give a historical bracket of the time frame. The first Egyptian stamps display images of ancient Egypt, thus the sphinx and the pyramids, but quickly shift to portraits of leaders and figures of power. The stamp obliterating King Farouk's portrait in circulation after his abdication, for example communicates that he is no longer the king. In later periods one finds a wide range of images covering almost every aspect of social, cultural and political life in Egypt's history.

To mark the 50th Anniversary of the discovery of the Tutankhamun tomb the treasures were shown to the world outside of Egypt for the first time in 1972. The exhibition at the British Museum was held from 30 March to 30 December 1972. St. Mark's Coptic Museum's stamp collection also includes the Collector's stamp album "Treasures of Tutankhamun" of 38 gold leaf engraved stamps issued by the British Museum as one of the outcomes of the 1972 exhibition. The engraving of each stamp underwent several revisions until the final version was recognized as an "artistic and technical triumph." The album comes with a certificate of authenticity by Egyptologist Dr. Virginia Lee Davis who reviewed and approved each stamp certifying that they are representative of the original Egyptian objects they depict. Sixteen of the thirty-eight of the stamps in the album "Treasures of Tutankhamun" are displayed in the current exhibition. Dr. Davies' essay on each object is also available for visitors to read.



MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Interactive Workshops

This past spring and summer the Museum offered interactive workshops to St. Mark's 9th, 11th and 12th grade Friday evening groups on Marguerite Nakhla's biblical scenes, her narrative icons in Virgin Mary Church in Zamalek, and on "Writing, Painting and Reading Icons." A workshop was also organized for a recently formed intergenerational group of parents and their children interested in learning about Coptic art.



The St. Mark's Language and Sports Summer Camp participants and St. Mark's Summer School children from grades 3 to 8 each participated in "Coptic Cross" workshops. One of the activities of the workshop was to colour or draw a "geometric" style cross after the Museum's painting by H.H. Pope Makarius III.



On August 17, twelve adults from St. Mary and St. John the Beloved Coptic Church in Pikering participated in an interactive workshop on Marguerite Nakhla and the six biblical scenes in the Museum. This the first a series of workshops the Museum plans to offer to members of this church.

Mahragan AlKeraza 2013

For this year's Mahragan AlKeraza, for the first time St. Mark's Coptic Museum offered a study research activity. In addition to the Mahragan Alkeraza's requirements participants had to interpret Marguerite Nakhla's painting The Miracle of the Great Catch by responding to a set of questions always focusing on this year's theme "Come Unto Me."

Mrs. Alice Hanna's research with a final mark of 93.75% won her the third place in the "Adult Research" competition.

Congratulations Alice!



Fr. Pishoy Atalla giving Alice Hanna her prize.