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The "Revenue stamps day"

Abano Terme March 15th 2008

This issue of our journal has a content very different from the usual as it is almost completely devoted to the "Revenue stamps day", a convention strongly wanted by AFISCAL, to remark the presence in the philatelic collecting of an important, although still neglected, branch as the fiscal philately is. The Convention has required a remarkable organizing effort, carried out by a few volunteer members who have spent a considerable labour and that we wish to mention, each giving his different, but always important, contribution: Michele Caso, Marco Locati, Cristiano Bussoli, Pierluigi Benedetti, Mario Mercuri and Gianni Cavazzoni. An equally heartily gratitude goes to the members who have contributed to the activities which can be the basis of the success of the Convention: the "one frame" exhibition and the social auction of revenues.

The idea of the Convention was born at the National Exhibition Vastophil 2007: the pleasure to meet other collectors of revenues, even if only a small group, in that circumstance has induced some of the participants to propose the organization of a day to be spent discussing, debating and chatting of revenues. The period was decided for the early months of 2008 and, for the location, Abano Terme was found convenient for the excellent hotel facilities, which guarantee good accommodation at affordable prices, and for being in Northern Italy, where about half of our members are resident. The presence of Cristiano Bussoli on location has ensured an easy contact with the hotels.

The initial idea of an informal meeting among friends has quickly evolved in the proposal of a philatelic Convention, with ambitious goals: first of all, publicity of fiscal philately, calling on postal philatelists, visitors and onlookers, for what the subject can attract those without knowledge of it; the meeting of other collectors, hoping to increase the membership of the society, the opportunity of meetings not only for society duties, like the General Meeting, but also for discussing an important subject like cataloguing, or just for a chat with friends.

So we have started this adventure, hopefully with a happy end, relying only on our forces, with much will and little funds, on the indispensable cooperation of the Padua philatelic club, which has assisted with the exhibition frames, and on the precious patronage of Abano Municipality, which has made available to us the prestigious venue of the Kursaal. A special thank also the Federation of Italian Philatelic Societies, which has spread information on the Convention.

A great attraction, at least we hope so, will be the auction sale of

the Pieroni Collection: we will offer some thousands documents, lovingly gathered by one of the most active collectors of revenue stamps, whose catalogue, published in 1992, two years before his death, today is a very sought after cult book. It is a wide range of document types, which cover the full range of revenues. Lots can be viewed in the morning. The most important document of the collection, an edict on playing cards with the related strips is reproduced on the back cover page.

This journal is intended to be a partial and incomplete representation of the Convention for those who could not, or did not want, participate. At the same time it is a guide to the "one frame" exhibits, with a synthesis of the themes developed and the illustration of significant pages or pieces.

An introductory article explains the problems and the merits of a collection of revenues in Italy, where there is not an adequate trade, nor fiscal historical studies and researches nor reliable catalogues. But the educated searcher can still find valuable items at moderate prices, always reminding the proviso contained in the Revenue Exhibition regulations: some revenues are expensive but not rare.

The first page is devoted to the introductory collection of the president, Michele Caso, which covers four frames and is available to all the philatelic societies willing to continue on this path of promotion of fiscal philately started with the "Revenue stamps day". The collection is not purely introductory, but shows also pieces of great rarity and interest also for the advanced collector.

We are giving title, author, plan and index (if communicated) and some representative pages of the "one frame" exhibited during the Convention. As the exhibition is non competitive, we have exceptionally allowed the use of two frames for those subjects which could not be treated in one frame only.

We also publish the decalogue for the compilation of revenue stamps catalogues, which will be discussed during the meeting. It may be reduced or expanded according to the results of the debate. The objective is of fixing, if possible, agreed cataloguing rules so to decide at which conditions a catalogue of Italian revenue stamps may be approved and adopted by AFISCAL.

Last, an article on the preparation of exhibits of fiscal philately, in the hope to see more exhibitors in the future. The paper recaps the main points of the GREX and of the Revenues SREV. The "one frame" exhibits look particulary fit to fiscal philately, as is not always the case in postal philately.

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Michele Caso, Presidente; Gianni Cavazzoni, Vicepresidente; Pierluigi Benedetti, Segretario-Tesoriere. Consiglieri: Salvatore Cannì, Giulio Geminiani, Emilio Pilutti. Sede presso il Presidente, C.P. 14225, 00149 Roma Trullo RM; e-mail mpcaso@tiscali.it Segreteria presso Pierluigi Benedetti, c/o Studio Notarile, Via T. Inghirami n. 76, 00179 Roma.

Sito internet: www.afiscal@altervista.org

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