



**Vas Mazzotta of Cromwell received a postcard at her Cromwell home several weeks ago 46 years after it was sent from her grandfather in Greece. It has her maiden name and no address on it, only that it was going to Hartford. The post office confirmed they delivered it, but are still stumped as to how it made it into the right pile for her delivery. The postcard was dated April 20, 1965 and contained an Easter greeting but no postage.**

## Woman Receives Postcard From Greece 46 Years After It Was Sent

**CROMWELL** - Vasilia "Vas" Mazzotta received an Easter postcard from Greece last month — nearly 46 years late.

The postcard was simply addressed to "Miss Vassoula Sitara" — her maiden name — in "Hartford Con." No postage, no street address and no ZIP code.

"I almost didn't believe what I was reading. I must have read it three times to decipher that, wow, this is from my grandfather 46 years ago," said Mazzotta, 59, of Vicki Lane.

U.S. Postal Service officials say they have no idea how the postcard, written by her grandfather, John B. Sitaras, ended up sorted with Mazzotta's mail and delivered on March 26.

The message on the postcard, dated "Athens 20 April 65," reads: "Dearest granddaughter, On the occasion of Holy day of Easter I send you this card to take an idea of Athens. I want you to enjoy Easter with all family. Kisses to Dad Mom & Johnny. I hug you. Bapou."

Bapou is the Greek word for grandfather, and he used the Greek variation of her name.

Sitaras, who learned English as a second language, never visited the United States. Mazzotta said she met him only a few times when she visited Greece as a child.

"It touched me emotionally, how someone can love you after the grave. It's incredible," Mazzotta said. She lived in Hartford until she was in fifth grade, when she moved to East Hartford, she said. Mazzotta lived there until she got married and moved to Middletown, and later to Cromwell.

Postal Service spokeswoman Maureen Marion said sometimes old mail turns up when a house is sold and cleared out, or a business mailroom is dismantled. She said there have been cases of military mail shipments that turned up after many years. In those cases, at least, there is a starting point to track down a sender or a recipient.

But this time, she's completely stumped. There are no hints of where the postcard has been since 1965.

"There's no evidence on the mail piece of it being in the mail stream at all," Marion said. "There is no postage and no barcode. It's a mystery in the mailbox."

Cromwell Postmaster Lisa Leavenworth said when Mazzotta came into the post office to thank officials for delivering the postcard, she could only confirm that it was delivered by the carrier, but not where it came from before the carrier had it.

"Postal carriers get 95 percent of their mail in direct order the way they deliver their route," Leavenworth said. "We don't know how it arrived to Cromwell, let alone how it ended up in order with her mail."

Mazzotta said she would frame the card with glass so she can read both sides and protect it.

"It lasted 46 years to get here. It deserves to last a while longer," she said.

## Greek ruins of Cyrene draw goats, cows, few tourists

**Tourism at the ancient Greek city in eastern Libya has suffered decades of neglect**

**SHAHAAT** — A toga-clad statue that would be a prize museum piece elsewhere lies half buried among cow dung at the ancient Greek city of Cyrene in eastern Libya, where tourism has suffered decades of neglect.

Goats and cows graze among the towering Greek and Roman columns of the ruined city, a UNESCO world heritage site perched on a mountainside with stunning views over verdant plains and the Mediterranean Sea beyond.

Founded in the 4th century BC by ancient Greeks and later ruled by Rome, the site lacks the protective barriers, souvenir kiosks and restaurants usually found at such places. Instead, it is surrounded by the dilapidated, ugly village of Shahaat.

"It's been the same here since the revolution in 1969. There's been investment in oil, but none at all in tourism," said Shahaat tourism policeman Hamdy Hamed.

The people of east Libya complain that there has been little investment in their part of the country since Muammar Gadhafi came to power in a military coup 41 years ago.

The region is now largely held by anti-Gadhafi rebels after mass protests and bloody fighting in the past month, much of it around the key oil exporting towns of Ras Lanuf and Brega.

"I hope to God we concentrate on tourism after the troubles. Oil runs out, but tourism will remain," Hamed added.

### Hoof prints, droppings

Libya produces about 2 percent of the

world's oil, and the oil facilities and oil worker neighborhoods nearby appear to be the few areas of east Libya to have seen recent investment.

The Mediterranean, azure at the shore then deep blue, laps at a near-pristine coastline but there are barely any resort hotels or restaurants.

Near Cyrene, one of the most important cities of the Hellenic world, are the lush hills and cool climes of Jebel al-Akhdar, but no facilities for tourists.

"We really want someone to look at tourism and for companies to invest. Most of the artifacts are still buried. Tourism has been neglected," said unemployed Shahaat resident Hamdy Bzeiwi, who has seen little of the income that would usually come from living close to a site such as Cyrene.

At the ruins, bags of rubbish litter the 2nd century AD Arch of Marcus Aurelius, and an amphitheater likely used for performances of Greek tragedies is now apparently being used as a sheep pen judging by the hoof prints and droppings.

A school of Greek philosophy is said to have been started at Cyrene, but the only ruminating there now is done by cows.

"It's a real shame," said Fitah al-Fakhri, who said he was visiting Cyrene after fleeing the battle-torn town of Ajdabiyah.

Beside Fakhri, his family and a friend accompanying them, there were no other human visitors to the deserted ruins.

"This is our history and there are goats all over it," Fakhri said. "We have no government, so how can you expect a place like this to be protected?"



**A woman walks in the ancient Greek and Roman ruined city of Cyrene in modern-day Shahaat, eastern Libya on March 26. Founded in 4th century BC by Greeks and later Romanised, Cyrene was one of the principal cities in the Hellenic world. Near Cyrene, one of the most important cities of the Hellenic world, are the lush hills and cool climes of Jebel al-Akhdar, but no facilities for tourists.**