

Generali inaugurates the Group's new Historical Archive in Trieste

→ To mark Generali's 190th anniversary, the Archive shares 19 stories exploring the Group's history of innovation, its ability to respond to challenges, its international outlook and corporate responsibility

Trieste - Generali has today inaugurated its new Historical Archive in Trieste, in the renovated Palazzo Berlam, to mark the Company's 190th anniversary.

The Archive explores a unique wealth of know-how, experience, and business initiatives linked to the values of innovation, ability to respond to challenges, internationality and corporate responsibility. These qualities have always been part of Generali Group's DNA, passed on throughout the years by employees and agents, and have enabled the Group to become a leading international player.

Today, to mark the celebrations for the 190th anniversary of Generali's foundation on 26 December 1831, this history is represented by [19 stories](#) created by writer and actor Matteo Caccia. It is a collective story involving different countries, cultures, languages, communities and peoples, just as cosmopolitan and open as the genetic imprint that has shaped Generali's history since its inception. It was no coincidence that this took place in Trieste, at the time a free port in the Austrian Empire, a place of cultural exchange and influences, of change, experimentation and innovation.

One such example is the **automatic dispenser of insurance policies**, which created much enthusiasm for Matilde Serao. A writer, nominated several times for the Nobel Prize for literature, she wrote about it in Naples' "Il Mattino" newspaper on 30th May 1899. Generali was the first to acquire the technology of a newly established company and to install it in the main stations to offer travellers protection against accidents during their trips: a guarantee of automatic and instant reimbursement, without the need for signatures and bureaucratic complications. By inserting a 10-cent coin into the machine, the bearer was given a policy that offered protection against accidents that may occur while travelling by train or steamer. A vending machine can be seen in the Archive today.

Another example of Generali's research and willingness to innovate is its participation in attempts to actively defend against adverse weather conditions with **hail cannons**, which were already in use at the beginning of the 20th century. Generali supported the experimental hail-fighting campaign by contributing to the costs to be borne by policyholders for the installations, as well as by providing a discount on the premiums of the policies they underwrote. It was in 1836 that Generali created the first Italian insurance policy against hail damage. It was a new and risky sector in the 19th century, due to the difficulty of establishing adequate rates and premiums because of the lack of data. Generali undertook its own data collection work in the field through its agency network - the documentary evidence is also of artistic value - which not only made the hail sector less uncertain, but also contributed to progress in the study of atmospheric phenomena by collaborating with the Central Office of Meteorology in Rome since 1881.

Among the many stories there is also one of the **first examples of corporate welfare**. Between 1851 and 1917, the Company undertook pioneering land and building reclamation work in the Caorle and San Stino area, on the north-west border of the large Adriatic lagoon, between the Livenza and Tagliamento rivers, building the banks of the Livenza river and a system of ditches and canals to drain the water using pumps. This work was carried out by private individuals - well in advance of state policy in this sector. The doctor's house was built with an adjoining surgery, a nursery school, a school, a post office, a church and a parsonage, as well as accommodation for sharecroppers' and farm workers' families. A new community was born, with an avant-garde vision of agricultural activity based on a model of sustainable development that today is called Genagricola.

The documents stored in the Archive include, among others, the personnel file of the writer Franz Kafka, with his job application and original CV, Umberto Nobile's documentation on the momentous scientific expedition to the North Pole, and space insurance for the United States and China. There are also nineteenth-century infographics on hailstorms in Italy, historic policies, photo albums, precious artefacts commemorating participation in world exhibitions or celebrating anniversaries.

Prestigious names and lesser-known documents, objects that have become part of everyday life, such as posters by Beltrame, Boccasile and Dudovich, go hand in hand with colourful advertising leaflets printed in different languages and fire plates that still appear on houses and buildings.

One of the largest insurance archives, declared a cultural asset by the Italian Ministry of Culture, the Historical Archive preserves a collective story in which the company's history is intertwined with that of its people. It does so through some 65,000 archival descriptions, equivalent to approximately 15 linear kilometres of documentation, 3,000 volumes of meeting minutes of the governing bodies, statutes, financial statements, and accounting books reproduced and available in digital format, and 3,000 reproductions from individual photographs, photo albums and historical printed material.

The Historical Archive contains the documentation produced by the Trieste Head Office (from meeting minutes of senior bodies to the documentation produced by the various branches and services), from the year of its foundation to the end of the 20th century, in addition to the funds of the Chairmanship, those of the Directorates of Venice and Milan, as well as those of Anonime Grandine e Infortuni.

The preserved documents come to life in research and guided tours, with storytelling that blends Generali's identity values with the historical strength of its tradition.

More information: <https://heritage.generalicom/en/>

Images: <https://generalicom.egnyte.com/fl/tqQEiNYVC8>

The Archive can organise guided tours by appointment for all interested parties in compliance with current anti-Covid19 regulations by contacting archivistoricogeneralicom@generalicom

Historical Archive exhibition credits: Accurat, Acrobatik, Artgroup, Matteo Caccia, Comunicarte, Fluido.it digital experiences, GPA - Gabriele Pitacco - Architect and Nicole Leghissa, Burelli carpenters.



THE GENERALI GROUP

Generali is one of the largest global insurance and asset management providers. Established in 1831, it is present in 50 countries worldwide with a total premium income of more than € 70.7 billion in 2020. With nearly 72,000 employees serving 65.9 million customers, the Group has a leading position in Europe and a growing presence in Asia and Latin America. A commitment to sustainability is one of the enablers of Generali's strategy, driven by the ambition to be a Lifetime Partner to its customers, offering innovative and personalised solutions thanks to an unmatched distribution network.