

# Postal Diary

## 6 April 2010 – 31 December 2010

by Joseph Fenech

### 17 April 2010

On the occasion of the visit to Malta of Pope Benedict XVI, as part of the celebrations related to the 1950<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the shipwreck of St. Paul, MaltaPost plc issued a miniature sheet (individually numbered) including one stamp with denomination of €3.00 and depicting the image of Pope Benedict XVI. The sheet features an aerial view of Malta (courtesy of NASA) as a background and also includes the official logo of the Papal visit, together with an image of St. Paul. The miniature sheet was designed by Paul Psaila and measures 130 mm x 85 mm, while the stamp measures 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamp was offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited. MaltaPost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 3/2010). The handstamp was inscribed “MaltaPost - ----- - MALTA/PAPAL VISIT 2010/JUM IL-HRUĠ/17.04.10”, and also included the Papal coat-of-arms. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured this miniature sheet in the stamp bulletin No. 282. It is to be pointed out that the handstamp shown on this stamp bulletin erroneously shows the date of issue as being 17.03.10 instead of 17.04.10.

On the same day, MaltaPost also issued Occasion Card Number 24 bearing the image of Pope Benedict XVI. Moreover, MaltaPost also presented a Silver Replica Stamp showing Pope Benedict XVI. This was the third in the series of Silver Replica Stamps issued by MaltaPost, and was struck in 99.9% fine silver. The silver stamp was issued in Brilliant Uncirculated (proof-like) condition, weighs 20 grams and measures 45mm x 30mm. Each stamp is individually numbered, with the issue being limited to a maximum of 2,000 pieces. The stamp is presented in a presentation box and is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity. Complementing the Silver Replica Stamp, MaltaPost also issued a limited edition (4,000 copies) of a numbered Commemorative Folder including the Papal visit 2010 miniature sheet. This folder, marked Commemorative Folder No. 2, carries the same number as the miniature sheet included in it.



Three special handstamps were used at different venues during the Papal visit of

17-18 April 2010. The special postmarks were the following:

Żjara tal-Papa 17.04.10 – Il-Grotta ta’ San Pawl – Rabat – Malta.

Żjara tal-Papa 18.04.10 – Il-Fosos – Floriana – Malta.

Żjara tal-Papa 18.04.10 – Valletta Waterfront – Malta.

All three postmarks depicted the official logo of the Papal visit.

## 21 April

MaltaPost plc informed the public that the closure of the airspace in parts of Europe because of volcanic ash clouds was affecting the transport of mail by air. This was impacting mail to and from Malta via main European airports, where very limited international air services were operating since Thursday, 15 April 2010.



## 24 April

MaltaPost plc issued an Occasion Card (number 25 in the series) to commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of St. Publius as one of the patron saints of Malta. The Occasion Card includes the imprinted €0.19 stamp from the ‘Occasions’ set issued in March 2010, and depicts the painting of St. Publius by Emvin Cremona which is found in the Parish Church of Floriana. On the same occasion, MaltaPost used a special handstamp inscribed: “MaltaPost – Philatelic Bureau – Malta/400 Sena/Patron ta’ Malta/1610 – 2010/JUM IL-HRUĠ/24.04.10”. This postmark was also available at a MaltaPost stand set up near the Floriana Parish Church in the evening of Saturday, 24 April 2010.



## 25 April

MaltaPost plc informed the public that delivery of mail to or from Malta was back to normal given that European flights had started to operate on a normal basis once again following the volcanic ash cloud crisis.

## 30 April

The Year Pack, including all philatelic issues for 2009, was issued by MaltaPost on Friday, 30 April 2010. The Year Pack is presented in an attractive folder illustrating the image of the armoury corridor at the Presidential Palace in Valletta, and including the triumphal doorway by Italian baroque architect, Romano Carapeccchia.

## 3 May

A new Sub-Post Office opened with effect from Monday, 3 May 2010, to provide all postal services as well as bill payment services, at Squire Bookshop, Triq Manoel De Vilhena, Gżira. A metal hand date-stamp (new type) inscribed with the words “MaltaPost p.l.c. – GŻIRA S.P.O. – MALTA” started to be used at this Sub-Post Office.



## 4 May

On Tuesday, 4 May 2010, MaltaPost plc issued the EUROPA stamp set for 2010. This set of two stamps was themed ‘EUROPA 2010 Children’s Books’. The two stamps in the set, valued €0.37 and €1.19 respectively, were designed by Edward D. Pirotta and measure 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited. The €0.37 stamp features the two main characters from the book “Puttinu u Toninu” created by Dr Philip Farrugia Randon. The €1.19 stamp features the cover artwork of “Meta l-Milied ma ġieħ”, written by Clare Azzopardi and illustrated by Mark Scicluna. The €1.19 stamp was chosen to participate in the EUROPA stamp best design competition. Stamp booklets containing five €0.37 stamps from this EUROPA set, were also issued on the same occasion. MaltaPost plc issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 4/2010). The handstamp was inscribed “MaltaPost----- - MALTA/EUROPA/CHILDREN’S BOOKS/JUM IL-HRUĠ/04.05.10”, and also featured an image of the characters Puttinu and Toninu. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in the stamp bulletin No. 283.



## 8 May

The Sub-Post Office at 7, Triq Ċensu Xerri, Sliema SLM 3062, was closed for business between Saturday, 8 May and Monday, 10 May 2010, both days included.

## **11 May**

On 11 May 2010, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) published the communications market review covering the period July – December 2009. This report indicated that the total mail volumes handled in the second half of 2009 declined slightly when compared to the same period a year earlier, from 23.7 million items to 23.4 million items. This decline was mainly attributed to a fall in the number of letter post items which outweighed increases registered with respect to all other segments of handled mail. During the period under review, all Quality of Service (“QoS”) delivery targets set by the MCA for the delivery of postal items had been met.

## **13 May**

Following extensive renovation works, MaltaPost’s Ghajnsielem branch resumed operating from its premises at Triq J.F. De Chambrai, Ghajnsielem GSM 1051, with effect from Thursday, 13 May 2010.

## **14 May**

MaltaPost plc announced that for the six months ended 31 March 2010, it had registered a pre-tax profit of €1.86 million (€1.18 million profit after tax), representing an increase of 3.5% over the corresponding period the previous year. The main factors underlying the performance for the period under review, in comparison with the same period the previous year, were the following:

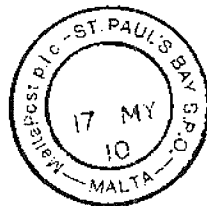
- revenue increased marginally to €10.55 million. The traditional domestic postal market registered a slight increase over the previous year. This was further complemented by an increase in the international mail business.
- employee benefits expense increased by 5.8% to €5.09 million.
- depreciation increased by 8.1% to €440,000 as a result of upgrading the company’s branch network in order to improve customer experience and to prepare for new business opportunities.
- other expenses decreased by 6.2% to €3.31 million in the continuing effort to improve the efficiency of business processes.

Shareholders’ funds increased to €11.92 million from €10.88 million as at 30 September 2009.

## **17 May**

A new Sub-Post Office opened with effect from Monday, 17 May 2010, to provide all postal services as well as bill payment services, at Paul’s Arcade, Triq il-Kahli, San Pawl il-Bahar SPB 3015. The opening hours of the Sub-Post Office are from

Monday to Friday, between 8.00am and 5.30pm, and on Saturday, between 7.30am and 12.30pm. A metal hand date-stamp (the new type) inscribed with the words “MaltaPost p.l.c. – ST. PAUL’S BAY S.P.O. – MALTA” started to be used at this Sub-Post Office.



### **1 June**

MaltaPost plc informed that as from 1 June 2010, social security cheques could be encashed from the Ghajnsielem MaltaPost branch.

### **3 June**

The letterbox in Triq Antonio Nani, Ghar Barka, Rabat, which had been temporarily inaccessible due to major construction works, was again back in service.

### **3 June**

On 3 June 2010, the National Statistics Office issued News Release 103/2010 highlighting the post and telecommunications statistics for the first quarter (January – March) 2010. According to these statistics, in the quarter under review, total postal traffic amounted to around 10.8 million items, an increase of 3.6% when compared to the corresponding quarter the previous year. The total number of parcels and other items sent through the national post in the period under review was 21,910, an increase of 27.3% when compared to the same quarter in 2009 (17, 215 parcels sent then).

### **4 June**

MaltaPost plc announced that it had extended the opening hours for collection of parcels and letter packets from the Parcel Office at Head Office, Marsa, by one hour. The new opening hours extended from 8.00am to 8.00pm. Furthermore, customers could also start to collect their parcels or letter packets after 5.30pm from the Parcel Office, Marsa, on the same day of the delivery attempt. All remaining uncollected parcels/letter packets were to be sent to the respective branch as indicated on the relevant notices on the next day, including Saturdays, thereby reducing the whole delivery cycle by a full day. Alternatively, customers could opt to have a courier delivery to their preferred address at a nominal fee of €3.50 payable on delivery.

### **11 June**

On the occasion of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, MaltaPost issued a set of two stamps and a miniature sheet (each sheet individually numbered), on Friday, 11 June 2010, the day of the opening match of the popular football tournament. The stamps and miniature sheet were designed by artist Frank Azzopardi. The sheet depicts a spiral

of the flags of nations where the competition was hosted in recent years on the €0.63 stamp and ending with the South African flag on the €2.50 stamp depicting Zakumi, the official mascot of the tournament. The stamps measure 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb), while the miniature sheet measures 130mm x 80mm. The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited and are available in sheets of 10. MaltaPost plc issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 5/2010). The handstamp was inscribed “MaltaPost----- - MALTA/2010 FIFA WORLD CUP/JUM IL-HRUĠ/11.06.10”, and also featured the image of the World Cup mascot Zakumi. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in the stamp bulletin No. 284.

A special hand postmark – World Cup Village 2010 – was used on Friday, 11 June 2010, at a temporary MaltaPost stand set up at the World Cup Village at the Gżira football ground at Manoel Island. MaltaPost representatives were present at this stand at the World Cup Village on various different days throughout the duration of the World Cup.



On 11 June 2010, MaltaPost also issued a World Cup Village commemorative personalised cover. The limited edition cover (2,000 printed) includes a personalised stamp depicting the World Cup Village logo, cancelled with the special hand postmark issued by MaltaPost for use in the World Cup Village. The commemorative cover was made available for sale at all MaltaPost branches as from Monday, 5 July 2010 (up till the end of the same month).



## 15 June

Between 15 June and 30 September 2010, the St. Julian's MaltaPost branch situated within the Lombard Bank plc premises in Triq Paceville opened for business from Monday to Friday between 8.00am and 1.00pm.

## 30 June

MaltaPost plc notified that due to the Isle of MTV Concert being held in Floriana

on Wednesday, 30 June 2010, the letterbox no. 252 at Triq San Publiju, Floriana, would not be accessible. Therefore, in agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, collection from this letterbox was to be effected at 3.00pm instead of the customary 7.00pm.

## 10 July

The Sub-Post Office at 51, Triq Ġorġ Borġ Olivier, Mellicha MLH 1024, was closed for business on Saturday, 10 July 2010.

## 12 July

On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Christ the King Parish Church in Paola, a special hand postmark – 100 Sena/Mit-Twaqqif tal-Parroċċa/KRISTU RE – PAOLA/12 ta' Lulju 2010 - was used on Monday, 12 July 2010 at the MaltaPost Paola branch.



## 14 July

On 14 July 2010, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) launched a Consultation Paper on the “Proposed regulatory direction on specific aspects of the universal postal service” (doc. no. MCA/10/43/C). The consultation, which ran up to 25 August 2010, made proposals to address a number of issues related to the effective regulation of the postal services by: (a) providing a clear definition on how to classify postal products and services within the scope of the universal service; (b) introducing the priority bulk mail product as a specific universal service product in the Universal Service Provider’s licence; (c) introducing tariff regulation for services which do not form part of the Universal Service Obligation but fall within the scope of the universal service; and (d) defining the express mail service.

## 20 July

Act No. XII of 2010 (An Act to repeal the Radiocommunications Act and to amend various laws relating to communications and to make provision with respect to matters ancillary thereto or connected therewith) was published as a supplement to the Malta Government Gazette No. 18,621 of 20 July 2010. Part IV of this Act is an Amendment of the Postal Services Act (Cap. 254).

## 30 July

Three special hand postmarks were issued on Friday, 30 July 2010, on the occasion of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. These postmarks, which were available at the MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau and

at the MaltaPost branches in Castille Square, Valletta and Victoria, Gozo, were inscribed:

MaltaPost – PHILATELIC BUREAU –  
CARAVAGGIO 1610 – 2010 – 30 July 2010.

MaltaPost – CASTILLE SQR - VALLETTA –  
CARAVAGGIO 1610 – 2010 – 30 July 2010.

MaltaPost – VICTORIA - GOZO – CARAVAGGIO  
1610 – 2010 – 30 July 2010.



MaltaPost further commemorated this anniversary with a limited edition (2,000 copies) Commemorative Folder, the third in the series. This Folder includes the miniature sheet that was first issued on 20 July 2007 to commemorate the arrival in Malta of this artist. The miniature sheet has now been overprinted (hot foil) with a unique number (same number as for the folder) and with the caption: 4<sup>TH</sup> CENTENARY OF THE DEATH OF CARAVAGGIO 1610-2010. The miniature sheet with one stamp of denomination Lm2/€4.66 depicts the complete painting of The Beheading of St. John. The miniature sheet measures 130mm x 85mm, while the stamp measures 44.0mm x 31.0mm with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamp was offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited and was available only as a miniature sheet.

On this same occasion, MaltaPost also issued a Commemorative Cover bearing the image of the portrait of Caravaggio, and including the overprinted miniature sheet.

## 6 August

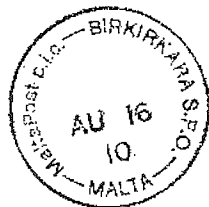
By agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, mail from all letter boxes was collected at 3.00pm on Friday, 6 August 2010.

## 16 August 2010

A new Sub-Post Office opened with effect from Monday, 16 August 2010, to



provide all postal services as well as bill payment services, at Nimrod Stationery, Triq il-Vitorja, Birkirkara BKR 2691. The opening hours of this Sub-Post Office are from Monday to Friday between 7.00 am and 12.00 noon and from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm, and also on Saturday between 7.00 am and 12.00 noon. A metal hand date-stamp inscribed with the words “MaltaPost p.l.c. – BIRKIRKARA S.P.O. – MALTA” started to be used at this Sub-Post Office.



## 18 August

On 18 August 2010, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) launched a Consultation Paper (doc. reference MCA/10/47/C) titled “Review of Quality of Service (QoS) Targets and Requirements to be achieved by MaltaPost plc”. This consultation document proposes that the QoS Targets, to be achieved by MaltaPost for the following three year period i.e. October 2010 – September 2013, be revised upwards. The MCA also proposes that the QoS target for the single piece priority mail caters also for loss and substantial delay. Furthermore, the MCA makes proposals in relation to the code of practice (“Committed to Customer Care”) published by MaltaPost plc and for the latter to submit a more detailed annual report on the complaints received including any emerging and recurring issues and actions taken to correct them. The consultation was to run up to the 17 September 2010.

## 20 August

On the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening and consecration of the Annunciation Church in Vittoriosa, a special hand postmark – “50 Sena/Mill-Ftuh u l-Konsagrazzjoni/tal-Knisja l-Ġdida tal-Lunzjata l-Birgu/1960 – 2010” – was used by the MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau on Friday, 20 August 2010.



## 20 August

MaltaPost plc notified that due to construction works, the letterbox situated in Xatt l-Ghassara Tal-Gheneb, Marsa, was put out of use for an indefinite period.

## 21 August

The Sub-Post Office at Malton Stationery, 7, Triq Ċensu Xerri, Sliema SLM 3062, was closed for business between Saturday, 21 August and Monday, 23 August 2010, both days included.

## **23 August**

The Sub-Post Office at 'Welcome Bazaar', 1, Misrah Frenċ Abela, Dingli DGL 1081, was closed for business from Monday, 23 August to Sunday, 29 August 2010, both days included.

## **24 August**

The Sub-Post Office at 51, Triq Ġorġ Borg Olivier, Mellieha MLH 1024, was closed for business on 24 and 25 August 2010, both days included.

## **1 September**

The Sub-Post Office at Oreana Stationery, Triq L. Casolani, Ta' Paris, Birkirkara BKR 4532, was closed for business between the 1 and 8 September 2010, both days included.

## **2 September**

On 2 September 2010, the National Statistics Office issued News Release 166/2010 highlighting the post and telecommunications statistics for the second quarter (April – June) 2010. According to these statistics, in the quarter under review, total postal traffic stood at around 10.7 million items, a drop of 1.4% when compared to the second quarter of 2009. The total number of parcels and other items sent through the national post in the period under review was 18,131, a decrease of 13% when compared to the same quarter of 2009 (20, 830 parcels sent then).

## **2 September**

Thousands of euros were stolen in a hold-up at the B'kara post office at about 12.45 pm on Thursday, 2 September 2010. The two female postal employees were held up as they were closing the MaltaPost outlet.

## **3 September**

The Sub-Post Office at 12, 'St. Bees', Wesghat il-Ġublew, Mġarr MĠR 1040, was closed for business between the 3 and 11 September 2010, both days included.

## **9 September**

The Sub-Post Office at 51, Triq Ġorġ Borg Olivier, Mellieha MLH 1024, was closed for business between the 9 and 13 September 2010, both days included.

## **16 September**

The Sub-Post Office at 'Paul's Arcade', Triq il-Kahli, San Pawl il-Baħar SPB 3015, was closed for business between the 16 and 18 September 2010, both days included.

## 20 September

Legal Notice 435 of 2010 – MaltaPost p.l.c. Licence (Modification) (Amendment) Regulations, 2010 – which was issued under the Postal Services Act (CAP. 254), was published in the supplement to the Malta Government Gazette No. 18,648 of 20 September 2010.

## 23 September

On Thursday, 23 September 2010, MaltaPost plc issued a set of four stamps in the theme ‘2010 International Year of Biodiversity’. The stamps depict four species found in the Maltese Islands, namely the Maltese (Filfla) wall lizard – stamp value €0.19, the storm petrel – stamp value €0.68, the Maltese pyramidal orchid – stamp value €0.86, and the fresh-water crab – stamp value €1.40. 500,000 copies of the €0.19 stamp were printed,



while 50,000 copies of the other three stamps in the set were printed. The stamps were designed by artist Maurice Tanti Burlo`. The size of the stamps is 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited, and are available in sheets of 10. MaltaPost plc prepared a special commemorative hand-stamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 6/2010). The hand-stamp was inscribed “MaltaPost----- - MALTA/BIODIVERSITY 2010/JUM IL-HRUĠ/23.09.10”, and also featured an image of the Maltese (Filfla) wall lizard. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in the stamp bulletin No. 285.

## 24 September

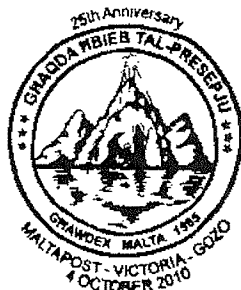
MaltaPost plc, in collaboration with Heritage Malta, organised an exhibition displaying a selection of artworks by Emvin Cremona, a Maltese artist who contributed immensely in the field of Malta postage stamp design for a number of years. The exhibition, themed “Postage Stamp Artwork: Emvin Cremona (1919-1987) – Shaping a Modern Identity in Malta’s Philatelic Heritage”, and held at the Contemporary Halls of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta, was inaugurated by MaltaPost Chairman Joseph Said. Emvin Cremona’s contribution to postage stamp design commenced in 1957, with the set of stamps commemorating the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the award of the George Cross. The exhibition was divided into three sections pertinent to Cremona’s prevalent themes and subjects, namely: the Human Figure, Pure Abstracts and Features from Malta’s Cultural Landscape. The works all form part of the MaltaPost plc collection. The exhibition was open up till Sunday, 31 October 2010.

## 1 October

MaltaPost plc informed that between 1 October 2010 and 14 June 2011, the St. Julian's MaltaPost branch situated within the premises of the Lombard Bank plc in Triq Paceville would open for business from Monday to Friday between 8.30 am and 2.30 pm.

## 4 October

On the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the “Ghaqda Hbieb tal-Presepju” (“Friends of the Crib”), Gozo, a special hand postmark was used on Monday, 4 October 2010, at the MaltaPost Victoria, Gozo branch. The hand-stamp was inscribed “25 th Anniversary/ MALTAPOST-VICTORIA-GOZO/4 OCTOBER 2010” in the outer rim, and “GHAQDA HBIEB TAL-PRESEPJU/ GHAWDEX MALTA 1985” in the inner ring, and also featured an outline of a crib imposed on the three hills which are characteristic of the emblem of the island of Gozo. This hand-stamp was designed by George Vella, a Gozitan artist and founder-member of the Gozo Philatelic Society.

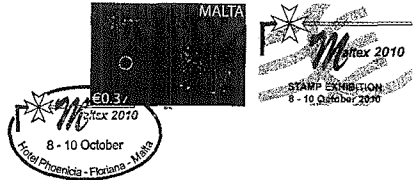


## 8 October

MaltaPost plc participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> Maltex Philatelic Exhibition organised by the Malta Philatelic Society at the Green Lounge of the Hotel Phoenicia in Floriana between Friday, 8 October and Sunday, 10 October 2010. The Temporary Branch was open between 9.00 am and 6.00 pm on Friday and Saturday, and between 9.00 am and 12.00 noon on Sunday. Services on offer at this Temporary Branch included the sale of stamps, philatelic products and other postal services. All mail posted at this Branch was cancelled with a special cancellation hand postmark which was inscribed “Maltex 2010 – 8-10 October – Hotel Phoenicia – Floriana – Malta” and also included the logo of the exhibition. A temporary letterbox service was also provided during the opening hours of the exhibition.

For this special event, MaltaPost issued an Occasion Card, a Postal Card, as well as a Maltex Personalised Cover. The Occasion Card, No. 26 in the series, features the imprinted definitive €0.68 stamp from the latest definitive set issued in December 2009 (and showing the image of the George Cross); the card itself portrays the ceremony of the awarding of the George Cross to Malta in April 1942. The Postal Card, No. 32 in the series, commemorates MaltaPost's participation in the EUROPA 2010 stamp design competition. The card carries the imprinted €1.19 stamp from the EUROPA 2010 set issued in May 2010 and featuring the cover

artwork of the book ‘Meta l-Milied ma ġieġ’ (written by Clare Azzopardi and illustrated by Mark Scicluna). The card depicts the two main characters from the book ‘Puttinu u Toninu’ by Dr Philip Farrugia Randon. Both cards were individually numbered, and were available for sale in mint or cancelled format. The Maltex Personalised Cover included a personalised stamp depicting the Maltex 2010 exhibition logo cancelled with the special cancellation hand postmark used by MaltaPost during the exhibition.



## 10 October

The tenth Philatelic Bureau card (PB10) in the series being issued by MaltaPost on a date when the day, month and year coincide – 10.10.10 – was issued on Sunday, 10 October 2010. This card carried a €0.37 stamp from the ‘Occasions’ set issued in March 2010 featuring an aerial view of Malta; the card itself depicts the church tower also appearing on the said ‘Occasions’ set. The Philatelic Bureau card was numbered and the stamp cancelled with a hand-stamp showing the 10.10.10 date. The card was available from the MaltaPost stand at the Maltex 2010 Philatelic Exhibition on the first day of issue, and subsequently from all MaltaPost branches.



## 15 October

Legal Notice 457 of 2010 – Postal Services (General) (Amendment) Regulations, 2010 – which was issued under the Postal Services Act (CAP. 254), was published in the supplement to the Malta Government Gazette No. 18,656 dated 15 October 2010.

## 19 October

On Tuesday, 19 October 2010, MaltaPost plc issued a set of four stamps themed ‘Treasures of Malta’, depicting natural treasures/sites found in the Maltese Islands. The stamps, designed by artist Cedric Galea Pirotta, show the Azure Window found at Dwejra Point Cliffs, Gozo – stamp value €0.37, the Blue Grotto in Wied iĊ-Ċurrieq – stamp value €0.51, the vertical sea cliffs at Ta’ Ċenċ, Gozo – stamp value €0.67, and the small uninhabited islet of Filfla – stamp value €1.16. 50,000 copies of each stamp were printed. The size of the stamps is 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited, and are available in sheets of

10. MaltaPost plc prepared a special commemorative hand-stamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 7/2010). The hand-stamp was inscribed “MaltaPost----- - MALTA/TREASURES 2010/JUM IL-HRUG’/19.10.10”, and also included an image of the islet of Filfla. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in the stamp bulletin No. 286.



## 2 November

On 2 November 2010, the National Audit Office (NAO) reported on the effectiveness of the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) in ensuring that MaltaPost plc, as the designated Universal Service Provider (USP), meets its universal service obligations and achieves the established minimum standards on the quality of service and the protection of mail integrity. The report found that the MCA has taken various measures to guarantee that the USP provides a sufficiently dense network of postal access points and has in place adequate arrangements for daily collection and delivery. The MCA has also defined the minimum standards to be complied with by the USP for the protection and security of mail. The MCA has subsequently audited the USP’s position concerning mail integrity obligations and drew up a series of observations and recommendations outlining where the USP needed to strengthen systems. Moreover, the MCA also regulates the quality of service by setting various standards and targets for the USP and by monitoring the postal operator’s level of achievement. The MCA is also involved in a number of preparations and actions in order to be in a stronger position to regulate postal services once all legal monopolies in the market are removed by 1 January 2013. This included the establishment of arrangements for managing common operational issues in a multi-operator environment. The report evaluates the adequacy of these measures and actions. It also highlights areas where there remains scope to enhance the MCA’s regulatory efforts, particularly on specific issues related to the measurement of the quality of service standards and to the USP’s conformance with all mail integrity obligations.

## 3 November

On Wednesday, 3 November 2010, at around 8.00 pm, a clearly identifiable MaltaPost van containing a number of mail items was stolen in the vicinity of Nigret roundabout, in Rabat, during the evening mail collection process. The mail items included letters collected on the day after 7.00 pm from the areas of Ta’ Qali, Mtarfa, Ghemmieri, Kuncizzjoni, Ghajn Qajjiet and Bahrija. The matter was reported to the Police and the Malta Communications Authority for any action as deemed appropriate in terms of law and the Postal Services Act. On 5 November

2010, MaltaPost informed that the stolen van had been found in the Marsa Industrial Estate with parts of it dismantled; however, the keys were found inside the van and all the mail was also found intact. The mail was subsequently processed by MaltaPost and delivered to destination the following morning.

## 9 November

On Tuesday, 9 November 2010, MaltaPost plc issued the Christmas 2010 stamp set. This set of three stamps reproduced Old Master paintings portraying the Madonna and Child. The stamps depict the paintings ‘The Adoration of the Magi’, found at the Lombard Bank Head Office, Valletta – stamp value €0.19, ‘The Flight into Egypt’, found at the Gozo Cathedral Museum – stamp value €0.37, and the ‘Madonna di Maggio’, found at St. George’s Basilica, Victoria, Gozo – stamp value €0.63.



1,600,000 copies of the €0.19 stamp, 400,000 copies of the €0.37 stamp and 100,000 copies of the €0.63 stamp were printed. The stamps were designed in-house by MaltaPost. The size of the stamps is 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited, and are available in sheets of 10. MaltaPost plc prepared a special commemorative hand-stamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 8/2010). The hand-stamp was inscribed “MaltaPost----- MALTA/ CHRISTMAS 2010/JUM IL-HRUG/09.11.10”, and also included an image of the Madonna and Child featured on the €0.63 stamp. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in the stamp bulletin No. 287.

## 10 November

On Wednesday, 10 November 2010, while participating in the Malta National Book Fair at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta, MaltaPost plc launched a Stamp Design Competition themed ‘Forests’, open to students in Forms 1 to 5 attending any secondary school in Malta and Gozo. The two winning designs may feature on the 2011 EUROPA stamp issue which will commemorate the International Year of Forests 2011. The winning stamps may also represent Malta in the competition for the best EUROPA stamp amongst all EUROPA official stamps, organised by PostEurop, the association representing all European Public Postal Operators. MaltaPost’s participation at the Book Fair was its first such participation, and formed part of the series of activities held to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Malta postage stamp.

## 13 November

A special hand postmark inscribed “GOZO PHILATELIC SOCIETY /EXHIBITION/MaltaPost/Victoria, Gozo – Malta/13-11-10”, was used on Saturday, 13 November 2010, at the MaltaPost Victoria, Gozo branch, on the occasion of the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Philatelic Exhibition organised by the Gozo Philatelic Society at the Ministry for Gozo Exhibition Hall, St. Francis Square, Victoria, Gozo between Saturday, 13 November and Sunday, 21 November 2010. Five different personalised stamps were also issued by the Gozo Philatelic Society to mark this edition of the Exhibition.



## 16 November

On 16 November 2010, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) issued its Decision Notice (document no. MCA/10/55/D) on the “Review of Quality of Service (QoS) Targets and Requirements to be achieved by MaltaPost plc”. The relative consultation process had been initiated in August 2010. The document presents MCA’s decision on the new QoS targets, covering a period of 3 years, to be achieved by MaltaPost in respect of the transit times for the following universal service postal products: (i) inland mail – ordinary mail (i.e. single piece priority letter mail), bulk mail, registered mail and parcel post; (ii) cross-border mail – ordinary mail, bulk mail, registered mail and parcel post. It also presents the MCA’s decision with respect to the measurement and monitoring of the level of loss and/or substantial delay of postal articles, as well as improvements to MaltaPost’s information and reporting requirements on the handling of end-user complaints and enquiries.

## 19 November

Through its Post Early Leaflet, MaltaPost plc encouraged the general public to post Christmas mail within the recommended posting dates to ensure timely delivery before Christmas. Local mail (letters/postcards/parcels) was to be posted by the second week of December. Air mail (letters and cards) to Europe was to be posted by the second week of December, while air mail to the rest of the world had to be posted by the first week of December. Air parcels to Europe were to be posted by the first week of December, while air parcels to the rest of the world had to be posted by the last week of November.

## 30 November

MaltaPost plc informed that, in an effort to enhance its service during the Christmas period, with immediate effect, it was extending the nationwide delivery service, as



well as the opening hours of various branches and the Parcel Office. Postal services in the Head Office branch were being made available from Monday to Saturday between 8.00 am and 7.00 pm, while the Parcel Office (for collection of notified non-dutiable parcels, bulky packets and EMS items) opened from Monday to Saturday between 8.00 am and 9.00 pm. Customs clearance service at MaltaPost Head Office was made available from Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 12.45 pm, and 1.45 pm and 7.00 pm, and on Saturday between 8.00 am and 12.45 pm. MaltaPost could also clear items from Customs on behalf of customers at a nominal fee upon receipt of authorisation from clients. As from 9 December 2010, the postal services of the MaltaPost branches at Mosta, Rabat, Birkirkara, Paola and Sliema, were available from Monday to Friday between 7.30 am and 12.45 pm, and from 4.00 pm to 7.30 pm, and on Saturday between 7.30 am and 12.45 pm. The MaltaPost branch in Castille Square, Valletta, opened from Monday to Friday between 8.15 am and 3.45 pm and then from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm, and on Saturday between 8.15 am and 12.30 pm. MaltaPost's nationwide delivery service was extended until 9.00 pm from Monday to Sunday. This extended service remained effective until the 23 December 2010.

## 1 December

On Wednesday, 1 December 2010, MaltaPost plc issued a philatelic commemorative miniature sheet titled '150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary First Malta Stamp, 1<sup>st</sup> December 1860'. The miniature sheet (numbered) includes one stamp with a denomination of €2.80. The said sheet features the Queen Victoria Halfpenny which was first issued for local use on 1 December 1860, as well as an image of an addressed envelope with the Malta Halfpenny Yellow tied by an 'M' cancellation mark – the earliest recorded use of the stamp. 20,000 copies of this miniature sheet were printed. The miniature sheet was designed by Joseph Said. The size of the stamp is 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb), while the miniature sheet measures 130mm x 85mm. The sheets were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited. MaltaPost plc prepared a special commemorative hand-stamp to cancel the stamp/sheet on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 9/2010). The hand-stamp was inscribed "MaltaPost----- - MALTA/150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY/ FIRST MALTA STAMP/1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 1860/JUM IL-HRUĠ/01-12-10", and also included an image of the 'M' cancellation mark. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured this miniature sheet in the stamp bulletin No. 288. Together with the miniature sheet, MaltaPost also issued the fourth in the series of Commemorative Folders (marked Commemorative Folder No. 4). Each one of this limited edition



(2,000 copies) numbered Commemorative Folders includes a miniature sheet carrying the same number as the folder.

## 1 December

A new Sub-Post Office opened with effect from Wednesday, 1 December 2010, to provide all postal services as well as bill payment services, at Emtes Stationery, Triq William Baker, Gudja GDJ 1341. The opening hours of the Sub-Post Office are from Monday to Friday, between 8.00 am and 12.00 noon, and 4.30 pm and 6.00 pm, and on Saturday, between 8.00 am and 12.00 noon. A metal hand date-stamp inscribed with the words “MaltaPost p.l.c. – GUDJA S.P.O. – MALTA” started to be used at this Sub-Post Office. An interesting feature about this date-stamp as used on the first day was that the day, month and year slugs were inserted upside down in the date-stamp.



## 2 December

A temporary letterbox was made available by MaltaPost plc at the Christmas Village set up at the Old Power Station at the Valletta Waterfront. The said letterbox could be used by the public between Thursday, 2 December and Thursday, 30 December 2010, during the opening hours of the Christmas Village.

## 2 December

On 2 December 2010, the National Statistics Office issued News Release 230/2010 highlighting the post and telecommunications statistics for the third quarter (July – September) 2010. According to these statistics, in the quarter under review, total postal traffic amounted to around 10.6 million items, an increase of 1.7% when compared to the corresponding quarter in 2009. The total number of parcels and other items sent through the national post in the period under review was 16,134, a decrease of 11.7% when compared to the third quarter of 2009 (18,269 parcels sent then).

## 2 December

As part of the activities organised by MaltaPost to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Malta stamp, an exhibition featuring the Halfpenny Yellow stamp in its variations, together with other postal items and artworks of interest, was held at the National Library of Malta (Bibliotheca) in Valletta. The exhibition, which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Dr Lawrence Gonzi, was open to the general public between 2 December 2010 and 8 January 2011, between Monday and Friday, from 8.15 am to 5.00 pm, and on Saturday, between 8.15 am and 1.00 pm. A public

lecture on the subject was given at the National Library by Dr Alfred Bonnici, President of The Malta Philatelic Society, on Monday, 6 December 2010.

## 2 December

MaltaPost launched the 'Letter from Santa Service', giving children the opportunity to receive a letter directly from Santa Claus. The letter was customised based on the details of the children as provided by applicants in the relative order-form. The personalised letter came with a matching envelope and Santa Claus personalised stamp.

## 6 December

As part of the celebrations to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Malta stamp, MaltaPost plc organised a series of open days at the MaltaPost head office building at 305, Triq Hal Qormi, Marsa, with the visits including tours of various operational areas, including the Central Mail Room. The open days were held on 6, 7 and 10 December 2010.

## 20 December

The Year Pack 2010, including all philatelic issues for 2010, was issued by MaltaPost plc on Monday, 20 December 2010. The Year Pack is presented in an attractive folder illustrating the image of the Halfpenny Yellow.

## 21 December

On the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the altar at St. George's Basilica, Victoria, Gozo, a special hand postmark was used on Tuesday, 21 December 2010, at the MaltaPost Victoria, Gozo branch. The hand-stamp was inscribed "ST. GEORGE'S ALTAR DEDICATION 1960 – 2010/ST. GEORGE'S BASILICA//MaltaPost Victoria -GOZO/21.12.2010".



## 24 December

Following agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, an early collection from all letterboxes took place on the 24 December 2010 at 2.00 pm.

## 24 December

Following agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, the Parcel Office at the MaltaPost Head Office opened for business between 8.00 am and 4.00 pm on 24 December 2010.

## 24 December

MalatPost plc informed the public that there was a quantity of Malta-bound mail from various countries that had been withheld in London and Frankfurt airports due to the disruption in services caused by the severe weather conditions in the UK and in central Europe. Mail was eventually processed and delivered to destination as soon as the weather conditions permitted.

## 27 December

In agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, MaltaPost plc was on shut-down, and all MaltaPost branches remained closed, on Monday, 27 December 2010. Normal service resumed on Tuesday, 28 December 2010.

## 31 December

Following agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, the Parcel Office at the MaltaPost Head Office opened for business between 8.00 am and 4.00 pm on 31 December 2010.

## 31 December

Following agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, an early collection from all letterboxes took place on the 31 December 2010 at 2.00 pm.

# MALTA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

## Renewal of Membership for 2011

We remind all members who have not yet renewed their membership that this is now overdue. Clause 14 of the Society's Statute provides that, "*All subscriptions shall be paid in advance by the thirtyfirst January of each year*".

For general information the annual membership fees payable to various countries are indicated hereunder:-

<i>Local Members</i>		€ 7.00
(Junior Members under 16 yrs)		€ 2.33
<i>Overseas Members</i>	Australia	AUD 30.00
	Canada	CAD 20.00
	Euro Countries	€ 15.00
	Norway	NOK 120.00
	South Africa	US \$ 23.00
	Switzerland	CHF 20.00
	United Kingdom	GBP 8.00
	U.S.A.	US \$ 15.00

Cheques, Bank Drafts and Postal Orders are to be made payable to the "Malta Philatelic Society". Cash remittances are sent at the risk of the remitter. Remittances are to be addressed to The Hon. Treasurer, Malta Philatelic Society, c/o 56, St. Mary Street, Tarxien TXN 1703, Malta. All remittances will be duly receipted.

If any clarification or further information is required, kindly submit your query to the Hon. Treasurer at the address mentioned above.

Should anyone be interested to join the Society an Application Form is to be found next page.