

Postal Diary

10 December 2007 – 14 March 2008

by Joseph Fenech

10 December 2007

Maltapost informed that the Attard Sub-Post Office, which was operated from Globe Stationery at 16A, Main Street, Attard, was no longer operational. Maltapost is in the process of opening a new Sub-Post Office in the same town.

26 December

By agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, no mail delivery was carried out, and all the Maltapost retail outlets did not open for business, on Wednesday, 26 December 2007. Normal service was resumed on Thursday, 27 December 2007. Maltapost also notified that an earlier collection than usual from all letter boxes took place on 24 December 2007 at 14.00 hrs.

28 December

Through Notice 1129 appearing in Government Gazette No 18,168 of 28 December 2007, it was notified that the Minister for Competitiveness and Communications had approved that the Stamp Design Advisory Board be constituted as follows:

Chairman – Mr Anthony P Pavia; Members – Mr Anthony Barbaro Sant, Dr Alfred Bonnici, Mr John Bonnici, Mr Domenic Cutajar, Dr Vincent Depasquale, Mr John A Mizzi and Mr Joseph Said; Secretary – Ms Jacqueline Pace Delicata. These appointments were to remain valid up to 31 December 2008.

29 December

Maltese and Gozitan personalities and local and international anniversaries were commemorated on a set of five stamps and a miniature sheet issued by Maltapost on Saturday, 29 December 2007. This set was designed by Harry Borg, and was printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps are 44mm x 31mm in size, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0mm (comb), and the miniature sheet is 123mm x 86mm in size, with a stamp size of 41.0 x 30.5mm, with a perforation of 13.5 x 13.5 (comb). The stamps feature the 25th anniversary of the Youth Football Association (Euro 0.01/Lm4 mils), the 100th anniversary of the Society of Christian Doctrine (Euro 0.21/Lm0.09), St. Joseph Institute founder Canon Monsignor Professor Francesco Bonnici (Euro 0.37/Lm0.16), Jesuit Father Manwel Magri (Euro 1/Lm0.43) and Carolina Cauchi, Gozitan foundress

of a Dominican monastery in Gozo (Euro 2.00/Lm0.86). The miniature sheet commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome (Euro 1.77/Lm0.76). Maltapost issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDCs No. 13 and 13a respectively). The handstamp was inscribed “MALTAPOST -



----- - MALTA” in the outer ring and “Anniversaries & Personalities/JUM IL-HRUĠ/29.12.07” in the inner ring. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No. 261.

31 December

Maltapost issued a miniature sheet to commemorate the last decimal coinage in use in the Maltese Islands, through a stamp issue on Monday, 31 December 2007. Designed by philatelic artist Frank X. Ancilleri, the miniature sheet is 100mm x 66mm in size. The stamp on the miniature sheet is 35mm x 35mm, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb), and has a face value of Euro 2.33/Lm1.00. The miniature sheet was printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamp on the miniature sheet depicts the two sides of the Lm1.00 coin, showing Malta’s national bird, the blue rock thrush (“il-merill”), and the Malta coat-of-arms, which is also reproduced in colour on the stamp. The surround on the miniature sheet shows a selection of decimal coins. Maltapost issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the miniature sheet on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 14). The handstamp was inscribed “MALTAPOST - ----- - MALTA” in the outer ring and “MUNITI TA’ MALTA/JUM IL-HRUĠ/31.12.07” in the inner ring. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin (unnumbered but marked “xxx”).



1 January 2008

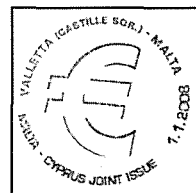
Maltapost issued a miniature sheet to commemorate the new Euro coinage through a stamp issue on Tuesday, 1 January 2008. Designed by philatelic artist Frank X. Ancilleri, the miniature sheet is 100mm x 66mm in size. The stamp on the miniature sheet is 35mm x 35mm, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb), and has a face value of 1 Euro (Lm0.43). The miniature sheet was printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The new Euro coinage stamp depicts the two sides of the 1 Euro coin, and also includes the Malta coat-of-arms in colour. The surround on the miniature sheet carries a selection of Euro coins. Maltapost issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the miniature

sheet on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 1). The handstamp was inscribed “MALTAPOST - ----- - MALTA” in the outer ring and “MUNITI EWRO TA’ MALTA/JUM IL-HRUĠ/01.01.08” in the inner ring. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured this miniature sheet in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No 263. The Maltapost retail outlets at Dar Annona, Valletta, and Victoria, Gozo, were open in the morning on 1 January to sell this miniature sheet and related philatelic items.



1 January

On 1 January 2008, Maltapost also released a joint stamp issue with Cyprus to commemorate the adoption of the Euro. The miniature sheet is 100mm x 62mm in size, and the two stamps in this sheet are 35mm x 35mm in size, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb). The miniature sheet was printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The Malta stamp depicts the Sleeping Lady from the Hal Safflieni Hypogeum. The Cyprus stamp represents the bust of Aphrodite. Each stamp has a face value of Euro 1/Lm0.43. Maltapost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the miniature sheet on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 2). The handstamp was inscribed “----- - MALTA/MALTA-CYPRUS JOINT ISSUE/1.1.08” on the border, and carried the Euro sign at the centre. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured this miniature sheet in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No 263 (the same one giving details of the Malta Euro coinage miniature sheet which was issued on the same day). As indicated above, the Maltapost retail outlets at Dar Annona, Valletta, and Victoria, Gozo, were open in the morning on 1 January to also sell this miniature sheet and related philatelic items.



1 January

Maltapost plc and Lombard Bank issued a limited edition set of Malta Euro coins 2008 and Miniature Sheets. This presentation pack measures 60cm x 15cm when unfolded, and contains one set of Euro coins issued in 2008 and protected in a blister pack, one numbered Malta decimal coinage philatelic Miniature Sheet issued and franked on 31 December 2007, and one numbered Malta Euro coinage philatelic Miniature Sheet issued and franked on 1 January 2008. Each Miniature Sheet carries an individual number matching that on the slip case of every set. This issue is limited to 30,000 sets, and is sold at Euro 25/Lm10.73, VAT included.

2 January

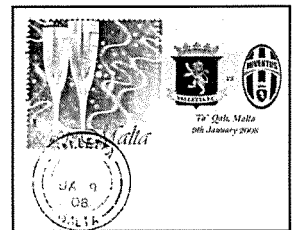
By agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, no mail delivery was carried out, and all the Maltapost retail outlets did not open for business, on Wednesday, 2 January 2008. Normal service was resumed on Thursday, 3 January 2008. Maltapost also notified that an earlier collection than usual from all letter boxes took place on 31 December 2007 at 14.00 hrs., and that the retail outlets at Dar Annona, Valletta, Victoria, Gozo and Head Office, Marsa, closed at 14.00 hrs.

8 January

The Malta Government announced that it was selling the remaining 40% stake it had in Maltapost plc, leading to the company's full privatisation. The 11.2 million shares of a nominal value of Euro 0.25 per share were to be offered by the Government and Malta Government Investments Ltd at Euro 0.50 per share. A pre-placement of 5.04 million shares (45% of the issue) was to be offered on 14 January 2008 and the share offer was to open to the public on 15 January. The Government shares in Maltapost were snapped up with the demand exceeding the supply by far. In fact the sale of the pre-placement shares, which were made available to stockbrokers, was over-subscribed thirteen-and-a-half times. The remaining shares, which were offered to the public, were over-subscribed by seven times. In accordance with Malta Stock Exchange Council Notice No. 425, Maltapost shares were to start being traded on the Stock Exchange on Friday, 25 January under symbol code MTP, and Maltapost, with a market capitalization of Euro 14 million, was to adopt a dividend policy of distributing up to 50% of yearly available profits. At the time of its full privatization, Maltapost declared it had 5 delivery hubs, 33 post offices, 27 sub-post offices and 431 stamp vendors. It also employed 581 people.

9 January

A personalised stamp commemorating the BetFair Cup contested between Valletta F.C. and Juventus F.C., was issued by the Valletta Supporters' Club, in conjunction with Maltapost plc and Valletta F.C., on Wednesday, 9 January 2008, the day of the match. This personalised stamp, carrying a denomination of 8Ð/Euro 0.19, was available on a souvenir envelope issued by Maltapost as MaltaPost – Personalised Stamp/Cover No 1, where it was franked by a Valletta circular date-stamp. The souvenir envelope was put on sale at a retail price of Euro 6 (Lm2.58). (Fig. 5)

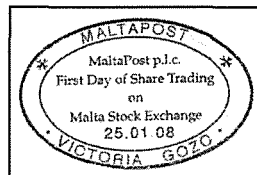


12 January

The Sub-Post Office at Pen House, Pjazza l-Eroj, Triq Ġanni Vella, Swatar, Birkirkara BKR 4252 was closed for business between Saturday, 12 and Saturday, 19 January 2008, both days included.

25 January

A special hand postmark – MaltaPost p.l.c. First Day of Share Trading on Malta Stock Exchange 25.01.08 – was used at the Maltapost Retail Outlets at Dar Annona, Valletta and the Victoria Retail Outlet, Victoria, Gozo, on Friday, 25 January 2008.



31 January

In a company announcement issued by Maltapost plc pursuant to the Malta Financial Services Authority Listing Rule 8.16., it was announced that the Board of Directors of Maltapost had appointed Mr Graham A. Fairclough of 14, Villa Laila, Triq l-Istwiel, Attard as Company Secretary of Maltapost plc with immediate effect. Mr Fairclough is also a Director and Company Secretary of Lombard Bank Malta p.l.c.

1 February

Due to Carnival activities on Friday 1st, Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th February 2008, articles posted in three letterboxes in Nadur and four in Victoria, Gozo, were collected at 6 pm instead of the customary 7 pm clearance. Maltapost affixed notices on each of these letterboxes denoting the new collection time cut-off and the nearest 7 pm collection letterbox. The letterboxes involved were:

LB 547 in Nadur Square, Nadur; LB 544 at Nadur Retail Counter, Nadur; LB 546 in 13th December Street, Nadur; LB 501 at Victoria Branch Office, Victoria; LB 503 in St Francis Square, Victoria; LB 506 in Republic Street, Victoria; and LB 507 in Fortunato Mizzi Street, Victoria.

9 February

The Sub-Post Office at 12, Wesghat il-Ġublew, Mġarr MGR 1040, was closed for business between Saturday, 9 and Tuesday, 12 February 2008, both days included.

11 February

The Year Pack, covering all fifteen issues for 2007, was issued by Maltapost on Monday, 11 February 2008. This Year Pack, the twentieth in the series, is presented in an attractive folder, with a photograph of Caravaggio's masterpiece, The Beheading of St John, on the outside cover. Another Caravaggio masterpiece, the St Jerome, is shown on the inside cover. The inside cover of the Year Pack also carries technical details relating to the various issues. The Year Pack was sold at a retail price of Euro 59/Lm25.33 including VAT.

18 February

With effect from Monday, 18 February 2008, the Maltapost Naxxar branch started to encash cheques issued by the Department of Social Security. Based on the response at this branch, Maltapost will then be looking to extend the service to other localities.

27 February

Maltapost reminded the general public, political parties and independent contestants that in line with the provisions of the General Elections Act 1991, mail containing any political content could not be delivered to destination on Friday, 7 March and Saturday, 8 March 2008. It therefore urged that all political material be posted in time to reach destination by Thursday, 6 March 2008.

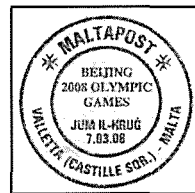
5 March

The "Habbata" (door knocker) was chosen to feature on a set of four stamps which was issued by Maltapost on Wednesday, 5 March 2008. The stamps, with face values of Euro 0.26/Lm0.11, Euro 0.51/Lm0.22, Euro 0.63/Lm0.27 and Euro 1.77/Lm0.76, are 44mm x 31mm in size, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.00mm (comb). The stamps, designed by Frank X. Ancilleri, were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited, and are available in sheets of ten. The four examples of "Habbata" shown on the stamps are to be found on the doors of the Ministry of Finance in South Street, Valletta (Euro 0.26), the Museum of Fine Arts, also in South Street, Valletta (Euro 0.51), the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations in Melita Street, Valletta (Euro 0.63) and the Museum of Archaeology in Republic Street, Valletta (Euro 1.77). Maltapost issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 3). The handstamp was inscribed "MALTAPOST - ----- - MALTA" in the outer ring and "IL-HABBATA/JUM IL-HRUĠ/5.03.08" in the inner ring. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in 'The Malta Stamp' bulletin No. 264.



7 March

A three-stamp set commemorating the upcoming Beijing Olympic Games was issued by Maltapost on Friday, 7 March 2008. The stamps, designed by Darren Duncan, have face values of Euro 0.05/Lm0.02, Euro 0.12/Lm0.05 and Euro 1.57/Lm0.67 respectively. The stamps are 44mm x 31mm in size, 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 ten stamps. The stamps depict different sports, with shooting being shown on the Euro 0.05 stamp, swimming appearing on the Euro 0.12 stamp and athletics being shown on the Euro 1.57 stamp. Maltapost issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 4). The handstamp was inscribed “MALTAPOST - ----- - MALTA” in the outer ring and “BEIJING 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES/JUM IL-KRUĠ/7.03.08” in the inner ring. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No. 265.



8 March

Maltapost informed the general public that the postal branches in Hamrun, Mellieha, Żebbuġ (Malta), Gharb, Ghajnsielem, Nadur and Xaghra, were not to open for business on Saturday, 8 March 2008, due to the General Elections, as per the General Elections Act 1991. However, collection and delivery of mail was still to be carried out by Maltapost in these localities.