

# Postal Diary

1 July 2006 - 22 November 2006

by Joseph Fenech

## 10 July

The Re-Direction of Mail service offered by Maltapost was expanded to offer a wider choice of options. The original service offered meant that clients could choose to re-direct their mail, for specified periods or permanently, in instances when they moved house or transferred to summer residences, or for other reasons. Through the expanded service, clients may opt to direct specific categories of mail as a matter of convenience. Categories available for re-direction with immediate effect are: all mail (excluding parcel, courier and EMS items), registered mail, parcel and courier mail, letter packets. In addition, addressees can also ask for any or all of their mail to be re-directed to any of the 32 Maltapost retail counters in Malta or Gozo.

## 13 July

Maltapost advised the public that as a result of the current situation at Beirut International Airport, the mail service to Lebanon was suspended until further notice.

## 15 July

A special hand postmark - Madonna tal-Karmnu, Valletta – was used at the Maltapost retail outlet, Castille Place, Valletta, during office hours. On this occasion, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the first coronation in the Maltese Islands of the Holy Image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in the Carmelite Basilica in Valletta (15th July 1881-2006), the Carmelite Fathers issued a commemorative card and a special personalised stamp.



## 21 July

Maltapost advised that its Mobile Unit service to various localities was being suspended temporarily until further notice, due to routine maintenance and internal refurbishment works to the Unit. Residents of Marsa, Marsaxlokk, Fgura, Vittoriosa, Qrendi, Marsascala, Pembroke, St Venera, Attard, Sliema, Gharghur and Bugibba were requested to avail themselves of postal services provided by the nearest Maltapost retail outlets or sub-post offices.

### **3 August**

Maltapost advised that it had introduced a new added service aimed at giving the public a wider choice with regard to mail delivery enquiries. This Proof of Delivery Service is aimed at providing clients with written proof of delivery/receipt of a registered item, for a minimal extra charge. Through this service, clients requesting proof of delivery and not having availed themselves of the Advice of Receipt (AR) Card service at point of posting, can now request confirmation by filling in the relevant details on a form obtainable from all Maltapost retail outlets and sub-post offices, and forwarding it to Maltapost Customer Care together with a copy of the registration receipt. Official confirmation of delivery will then be forwarded to the client in due course.

### **8 August**

Maltapost advised that it had just introduced a new parcel labelling system at its postal retail counters, eliminating the need to affix stamps to parcels. The service is available for airmail parcels to foreign destinations. Even though this new system does away with the use of stamps for mailing of parcels, clients wishing to post parcels with stamps in their possession may continue to do so until their stock lasts. In the initial phase, the A6-size label will carry details of the country of destination, zone, weight, barcode, date and postal costs. The barcode and parcel details are also printed on the client's receipt, thus allowing for any necessary certification at a later stage. The labels are designed according to Universal Postal Union standards, and are in line with similar labels used by the majority of postal administrations.

### **11 August**

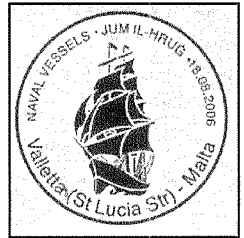
The Malta Government announced that Lombard Bank Malta had taken over the equity in Maltapost previously owned by Transend Worldwide of New Zealand. Since 2002 Transend's experience had contributed to the implementation of the operational restructuring project at Maltapost entailing a reform of both the processing and delivery functions, including a realignment of work practices and working times, as well as investment in modern equipment and technology aimed at enhancing productivity.

### **14 August**

Postal retail outlets, with the exception of the retail outlets in Castille Place, Valletta, Malta International Airport, Qawra, St. Julians and Victoria, Gozo, did not open for business. All sub-post offices and licensed stamp vendors offered postal services as usual. However, collection and delivery of mail was still carried out by Maltapost. All postal services resumed on Wednesday, 16 August.

## 18 August

A new set of five stamps depicting various periods in Malta's colourful maritime history over a 450-year span, from sail to steam, and from bronze guns to guided missiles, was issued by Maltapost. The stamps, which were designed by Francis X. Ancilleri and offset printed by Printex Ltd on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper, have face values of 8c (Gran Caracca di Rodi), 29c (Guillaume Tell), 51c (USS Constitution), 76c (HMS Dreadnought) and Lm1.00 (Slava and USS Belknap). The stamps come in a size of 44.0 mm x 31.0 mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14 (comb), and are available in sheets of ten. Maltapost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue. The handstamp was inscribed "Naval Vessels – Jum il-Hrug – 18.08.2006/-----/Malta". The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in 'The Malta Stamp' bulletin No 244.



## 18 August

Maltapost issued a thematic album entitled "The Maltese Countryside". The album, the first in a series, and offered for sale at Lm4.00, takes a look at the Maltese countryside through a number of stamp sets issued since the year 2000. The album includes 8 issues with cancelled stamps, together with a number of 16-stamp sheetlets. Besides a general essay, the text also includes full annotations of all the stamps in the album.

## 25 August

Through Notice 741 appearing in Government Gazette No 17,960, it was announced that in exercise of the powers conferred by section 36(2) of the Postal Services Act, the Minister for Competitiveness and Communications directed that the Self Adhesive Booklet (printing date 2003) containing postage stamps of denomination value of 7c and 16c shall no longer be valid for prepayment of postage from and after Monday, 28th August 2006. Any postal articles with postage stamps so invalidated shall be deemed not duly stamped for the purpose of the Postal Services Act. Any person having in his possession any postage stamps hereby invalidated was allowed two months after the date stated above to surrender these stamps to Maltapost plc which would in turn exchange them for other valid postage stamps on an equal value.

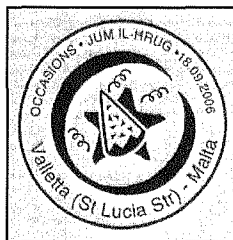
## 9 September

Postal retail outlets, with the exception of the retail outlets in Castille Place, Valletta, Malta International Airport, Qawra, St. Julians and Victoria, Gozo, did

not open for business. All sub-post offices and licensed stamp vendors offered postal services as usual. However, collection and delivery of mail was still carried out by Maltapost. All postal services resumed on Monday, 11th September.

### 18 September

A new set of four stamps entitled “Occasions” was issued. These stamps are primarily intended to make certain occasions more special, by being more specific in their message. The four stamps in this set were designed by Jean Pierre Mizzi, and were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited. The stamps, which are 35 mm x 35 mm in size, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb), are available in sheets of ten. The stamps have face values of 8c (Happy Birthday), 16c (Happy Anniversary), 27c (Congratulations) and 37c (Best Wishes). Unlike other stamp issues, these “Occasions” stamps will have an extended sales period. Maltapost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue. The handstamp was inscribed “Occasions/Jum il-Hrug – 18.09.2006/-----/Malta”. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No 245.



### 19 September

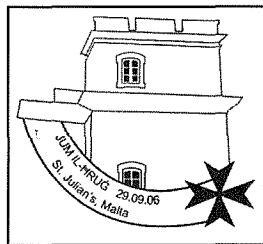
Following a decision by the Malta Communications Authority, with effect from Tuesday, 19th September, the local postage rate for letters/postcards up to 50g in weight was increased by one cent, going up from 7c to 8c. The same one cent rate increase is applicable on printed papers up to 50g in weight. All other rates from 50g upwards remained unchanged.

### 26 September

Maltapost advised the public that the mail service to Lebanon had resumed, after it had been suspended as a result of the situation at Beirut International Airport.

### 29 September

A set of five stamps featuring castles and towers in the Maltese Islands, was issued on 29th September. The stamps, whose design and photography was handled by Anouschka Grech, were offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps are 31.0 mm x 44.0 mm in size, with a perforation of 14.0 x 13.9 (comb), and are available in sheets of ten. The stamps have face values of 7c (Wignacourt Tower), 16c (Verdala Castle), 27c



(San Luċjan), 37c (Kemmuna Tower) and Lm1.00 (Selmun Castle). Maltapost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue. The handstamp is inscribed “Jum il-Hruġ – 29.09.06/-----/Malta”. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No 246.

### **29 September**

Maltapost notified the public that the sub-post office at Siġġiewi was closed with immediate effect. The public was informed that it could avail itself of postal services through the Maltapost Mobile Unit, which visited Siġġiewi (near the Siġġiewi Parish Church) every Thursday (between 7.45 am and 10.00 am) and every Friday (between 7.45 am and 9.15 am), or from the Maltapost retail outlets in Żebbuġ or Qormi. In addition, stamps were sold from various commercial outlets in Siġġiewi. Maltapost notified that it had started the process to open another sub-post office in Siġġiewi.

### **30 September**

Pre-2002 International Reply Coupons will no longer be exchangeable for postage stamps representing the minimum postage pre-payable for an unregistered priority letter post item or an unregistered airmail letter sent abroad after the close of business on Saturday, 30th September. The Beijing Model 1 International Reply Coupons will cease to be valid for the exchange of postage stamps representing the minimum postage pre-payable for an unregistered priority letter post item or an unregistered airmail letter sent abroad, after close of business of Saturday, 30th December.

### **6 October**

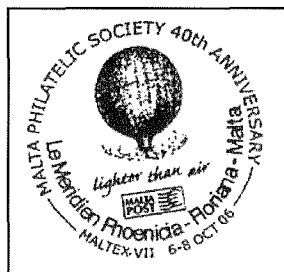
A Temporary Branch Post Office was set up at the Ballroom of Le Meridien Phoenicia, Floriana between Friday, 6th and Sunday, 8th October, during the opening hours of the MALTEX Philatelic Exhibition organised by the Malta Philatelic Society. The Temporary Branch was open between 9.00 am and 6.00 pm on Friday and Saturday, and between 9.00 am and 1.00 pm on Sunday. All the mail posted at this Branch was cancelled with the MALTEX special cancellation, inscribed “MALTEX 2006, 6-8 October, Le Meridien, Floriana, Malta”, which also carried the logo of the exhibition.



### **6 October**

The Philatelic Bureau of Maltapost issued two Occasion Cards on the occasion of

the 40th Anniversary of the Malta Philatelic Society, which was commemorated during this year's MALTEX Philatelic Exhibition held at Le Meridien Phoenicia between the 6th and the 8th October. The Occasion Cards, both denominated 51c, which is the Air Express rate for Europe, reproduce a pen drawing by Alfred Caruana Ruggier after an old French print showing the first attempt at producing a lighter-than-air device designed for flying by the Montgolfier brothers at Annonay on 4th June 1783. The imprinted stamps are revalued stamps from the 1974 Centenary of the Universal Postal Union set designed by Sandra and George Ellul Sullivan, and from the Air Transport set designed by Richard J. Caruana. A special handstamp was also used with these Occasion Cards. The same handstamp was also used to cancel a special personalised stamp commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Philatelic Society and also for the Commemorative Cover which was issued for this occasion. The cover and personalised stamp were only available during the MALTEX Exhibition. Stamp designers who had designed Maltapost stamp issues in 2005/2006 were invited to the MALTEX stamp show to sign First Day Covers of the sets they had designed.

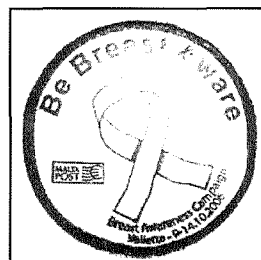


### 9 October

The sub-post office at 51, G. Borg Olivier Street, Mellieha, was closed for business between Monday, 9th October and Saturday, 14th October, both days included.

### 9 October

A special hand postmark - Be Breast Aware, Valletta - was used at the Maltapost retail outlet, Castille Place, Valletta, from Monday, 9th October to Friday, 13th October, between 8.15 am and 4.30 pm, and on Saturday, 14th October, between 8.15 am and 12.30 pm.



### 13 October

Maltapost issued a reprint of the 1c definitive stamp originally issued in the year 2000. This stamp had been designed by Maurice Tanti Burlo' and printed by Bundesdruckerei GmbH. The new re-print is slightly different from the original issue, as it has been printed by Printex Ltd. The re-issue is printed in vertical format on Maltese Cross watermarked paper, whereas the 2000 issue had been printed in horizontal format on non-watermarked paper.



This re-issue in sheets of ten also carries a barcode on the surround.

### 19 October

All Maltapost services returned back to normal with immediate effect following the strike action ordered the previous day by the Unior Haddiema Maghqudin. Bulky items not delivered on the 18th October were delivered on the 19th.

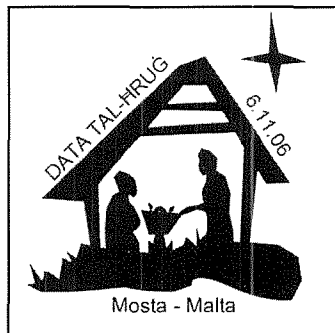
### 28 October

A special hand postmark – 1906 – Ċentinarju – 2006, Knisja Sant'Antnin ta' Padova – was used at the Maltapost retail outlet in Ghajnsielem, Gozo on Saturday, 28th October, between 7.30 am and 1.45 pm.



### 6 November

A Christmas set of four stamps and a miniature sheet was issued by Maltapost. The stamps carry images of four Maltese composers whose respective anniversaries fall in 2006, while the miniature sheet commemorates the 250th anniversary from the birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. All the stamps also carry a motif of Christmas music. The stamps, designed by Gozitan artist George Vella, were offset printed by Printex Ltd on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps come in a size of 44 mm x 31 mm with a perforation of 13.9 x 14 (comb), with the miniature sheet perforation being 13.5 x 13.5 (comb). The stamps have face values of 8c (Paolino Vassallo), 16c (Carmelo Pace), 22c (Paul Nani) and 27c (Carlo Diacono), while the miniature sheet has a face value of 50c. A special commemorative handstamp inscribed “Data tal-Hruġ – 6.11.06/-----/Malta” was prepared by Maltapost to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No 247.



*We wish all our members  
and their families  
a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year*