

POSTAL – DIARY (1999)

by Anthony Fenech

02 January - A special handstamp was used at Dar Annona, Castille Place, Valletta, inscribed as follows: "Mattia Preti - 3 January 1699/Valletta-Malta/2 January 1999/III Centenary of His Death".

Special commemorative covers were prepared by the Committee responsible for the festivities marking the III Centenary of Mattia Preti's Death.



13 January - Due to the shortage of 6c stamps, the 6c value in the commemorative Anniversaries 1998 set - Anniversary of UN Declaration on Human Rights - was reprinted today.

20 January - Maltapost plc has issued the eleventh in the series of Year Packs containing stamps issued in 1998. The pack features a view of Dwejra Gozo and marine life on the outer cover.

Postcard No.4 featuring the 6c Treasures of Malta - Maltese Costumes Stamp has been issued with the Year Pack. The postcard can also be purchased separately for 10c (VAT included) from the philatelic Window at the Valletta Counter.

27 January - Zebbug B.P.O. in Sciortino Street is temporarily closed with effect from today for structural alterations. Maltapost plc said that postal services in Zebbug were available as follows:

Counter services at the Local Council Office in Bishop Caruana Street and Postmen and Mail Room services at the Zebbug Police Station.

29 January - Mr Anthony Pavia, Permanent Secretary at The Ministry of Transport and Communications has been appointed Acting Postmaster General with effect from 1st January 1999.

01 February - Maltapost plc informed the public that from today Monday, 1st February, new metal handstamps have been put in use at:

- (i) Balzan B.P.O. (Mail Room) and
- (ii) Sliema B.P.O. (Counter)

22 February - A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading "Better Shots make/ Better conservationists/25th Anniversary - 1973-1998/Federation for Hunting & Conservation" was used at the Central Mail Room, Marsa, from Monday February 22 to Saturday February 27th 1999.

26 February - A new postage stamp set was issued today commemorating the 900th Anniversary of The Foundation of The Sovereign Military Order of Malta (S.M.O.M.).

Stamp values 2c, 6c, 16c, 27c were designed by Frank X. Ancilleri.

The stamps were printed in sheets of ten stamps on unwatermarked paper at Bundesdruckerei GmbH (Germany) who have taken over from Printex Ltd. in the printing of Malta stamps in the future.

A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



08 March - A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "Fourth Maltese Medical School/Conference/10-13 March 1999" was used at the Central Mail Room, Marsa, from the 8th to the 13th March 1999.

20 March - A special handstamp was used at the Counter Hall, Dar Annona, Castille Place, Valletta to commemorate Maltapost plc participation, through its sole agent Georg Roll stamps GmbH in the "Australia '99" World Stamp Exhibition, held in Melbourne, between the 19th and 24th March 1999.

The handstamp was used from the 19th to the 24th March in Australia, and on Saturday 20th March and between Monday 22nd and Wednesday 24th in Valletta. The inscription on the handstamp read: "Melbourne/World Stamp Expo/19-24 March 1999".

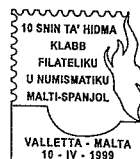


30 March - Maltapost plc notified that the postal service to and from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia and Yugoslavia has been suspended until further notice because of hostilities in the area.

06 April - Two new postage stamp sets were issued today, one commemorating the setting up of the Council of Europe, fifty years ago in May 1949, and the other set "Europa 1999". The theme for this year's Europa stamps was "Nature Reserves". Both sets were designed by Richard J. Caruana. Only one special handstamp inscribed "Jum il-Hrug - 6.IV.1999/Kunsill ta' l-Ewropa/Riservi Naturali/Valletta - Malta" was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



10 April - A special hand-postmark was used at Dar Annona Counter Hall to mark the tenth anniversary of the founding of The Philatelic-Numismatic Club of The Spanish Maltese Circle. The postmark was inscribed "10 Snin ta' Hidma/Klabb/Filateliku/u Numismatiku/Malti-Spanjol/Valletta-Malta/10-IV-1999". Special commemorative covers were prepared by the Maltese-Spanish philatelic and Numismatic Club for the occasion.



12 April - The Bugibba Sub-Post Office had been closed until April 24th. During this period, customers could avail themselves of the postal services offered at St.Paul's Bay Branch Post Office in Main Street.

19 April - The Sub-Post Office at 6, Jubilee Esplanade, Mgarr, was going to be closed to the public from Saturday 24th April until the following Saturday, reopening on Monday 3rd May. During this time, the public was invited to use the Mosta Branch Post Office in Constitution Street.

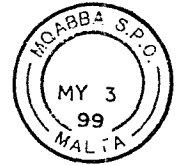
27 April - Maltapost plc notified that a special hand postmark "IBRA '99" was to be used at the Counter Hall, Dar Annona, Valletta from Tuesday 27th till Friday 30th April and on Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th May 1999.

The hand postmark is inscribed: "IBRA/World philatelic Exhibition/27.4-4.5.1999". A similar hand postmark was also used by Maltapost plc sole agent Georg Roll Stamps GmbH in the "IBRA '99 World Stamp Exhibition which took place in Nuremburg, Germany, between the 27th April and the 4th May 1999.



03 May - A new Sub-Post Office was opened at 117, Parish Street, Imqabba, on Monday, May 3, 1999. The postal services offered at the new S.P.O. included:

- Sale of stamps and postal stationery;
- Sale and encashment of local and foreign Money and Postal Orders;
- Registration of postal articles;
- Posting of Parcels;
- Encashment of postcheques;
- Payment of telephone Bills and
- Sale of Telecards.



A metal 27mm double-ring date stamp inscribed "Mqabba S.P.O. - Malta" was used to cancel out stamps etc and to perform counter duties. The telephone number at this Sub-Post Office is 683292.

20 May - Maltapost plc notified that:

- (i) Mail to Libya is once again being dispatched **by Air**;
- (ii) Mail to Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia is being dispatched **via Athens**;

01 June - The P.O. Boxes Section was transferred from Castille Place to 46, West Street, Valletta (on the side of The Auberge d' Aragon) as from 1st June.

Bulk posting services were also transferred from Castille Place but to the Valletta Maltapost Branch at 75, Old Bakery Street as from 1st June 1999.

02 June - A postage stamp set of five se-tenant stamps commemorating the setting up of The Universal Postal Union, 125 years ago, was issued today. The set was designed by Ansgar Spratte, a foreign stamp designer. A special hand postmark was used for cancelling philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



16 June - Maltapost plc issued yet another set of postage stamps - a set of five 'comic' stamps to boost up Tourism in Malta. The stamps are designed by Gorg Mallia.

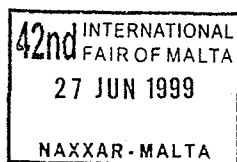
A special hand postmark was used on all philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



19 June - Zebbug Local Council Office and The Branch Post Office, at present located in the building, will be closed today, Saturday.

27 June - A Temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the 42nd International Fair of Malta, Naxxar, from Sunday June 27th to Sunday July 11th. The postal services available at the T.P.O. on the Maltapost Stand N60 at The International Fair included:

- Sale of Postage Stamps and Postal Stationery;
- Mailing of letters and letter packets;
- Registration of letters;
- Mailing of parcels;
- Sale and encashment of Money & Postal Orders;
- Encashment of Postcheques;
- Philatelic sales and Telecards;
- E.M.S. Datapost.



Postal articles posted at this T.P.O. were postmarked by a special hand datestamp.

01 July - Maltapost plc notified that a Stamp Design Competition was being held for the selection of a set of five postage stamps on the theme "25th Anniversary - Republic of Malta". The competition was open to Maltese citizens and designs were to be submitted not later than 1.00 pm on Saturday, August 7, 1999:

02 July - A special handpostmark "Philexfrance '99" was used at The Counter Hall (Dar Annona), Valletta from Friday 2nd to Saturday 10th July 1999 excepting Sunday 4th July. The handstamp was also in use at the "Philexfrance '99 World Stamp Exhibition between the 2nd and the 11th July 1999 by the Agent for Maltapost plc at the Paris Show.



06 July - The Mgarr (Malta) Sub Post Office will be temporarily closed between July 6 and July 13 both days inclusive.

14 July - As from to-day, mail will be delivered earlier, following an agreement reached between Maltapost plc and the G.W.U. Postmen will start delivering mail at 9.30 am rather than at 11.00 am, until the end of August.

29 July - A special hand postmark commemorating the Centenary of the death of Dr Nikola Zammit was in use at the Counter Hall, Valletta, on Thursday 29th July 1999.



31 July - The Sub-Post Office at "Best Mark" Rokku Buhagiar Street, Qrendi was to be closed temporarily from 31 July until August 7. The nearest Post Office is at 8, St.Catherine's Street, Zurrieq.

07 August - The Sub-Post Office at Old Trafford Stationery, Arznell Street, Marsaxlokk was to be closed temporarily between August 7 - 14, both dates inclusive. The nearest Post Office is that in St.Lucian Street, Zejtun.

09 August - It was notified that the following three Sub-Post Offices were to be closed temporarily as follows:

- Tarxien Sub-Post Office at "Forex" 16, Market Square, Tarxien from Monday, August 9 to Saturday August 21; The nearest Post Office is that in Paola Square, Paola.
- Kalkara Sub-Post Office at 68, Bishop Gonzi Square, Kalkara, from Monday, August 9 to Saturday August 21; The nearest Post Office is the Cospicua Branch Post Office in St. Paul's Church Area'
- Ta' Xbiex Sub-Post Office at Fleet Stationery, Testaferrata Street, Msida, from Monday 16th to Saturday 21st August; During this period, customers could avail themselves of services at Msida Branch Post Office in Gwardamangia Hill.

16 August - Maltapost plc informed the public that the Zebbug Branch Post Office in Sciortino Street, Zebbug, had reopened for business as from today, following structural alterations.

17 August - Ghaxaq Sub-Post Office at 166, St.Mary Street, Ghaxaq was to close temporarily from Tuesday 17th to Monday 30th August. During this period the public might avail itself of postal services offered at Zejtun Branch Post Office in St.Lucian Street.

21 August - Postal Card (No 20) was issued on the occasion of the participation of Maltapost plc, through its agent, at the China '99 World Philatelic Exhibition from 21 to 30 August 1999. The card has imprinted thereon the two stamps of the Europa 1999 postage stamp set and the logo of the exhibition. The postal Card could be sold mint or used at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO as well as at the Maltapost plc agent's stand at Beijing "China '99".



A special hand postmark commemorating this event was also available at the Counter Hall, Valletta, on Saturday 21st, between Monday 23rd and Saturday 28th, and on Monday 30th August 1999.

A similar hand postmark was also used by the representative of Maltapost plc at China '99 between August 21 - 30, 1999.

23 August - Dingli SPO at Welcome Bazaar, Frenç Abela Square, Dingli was to

close temporarily from Monday 23rd to Saturday 28th August. During this period, the public could avail itself of postal services offered at Rabat Branch Post Office in Parish Square.

25 August - A postage stamp set 'Fauna of the Mediterranean Sea' was issued in the format of a Sheetlet of 16 different stamps all valued at 6c. The stamps are designed by Andrew Micallef. A special hand postmark was used on all philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



27 August - A special hand postmark marking Maltapost plc participation in The Riccione Fair was in use at The Counter Hall, Dar Annona, Valletta, on the 27th and 28th August 1999. A similar handstamp was used concurrently at Riccione on The Maltapost Stand. Maltapost plc was represented at Riccione by Mr Joseph Buttigieg of The Sliema Stamp Shop. The handstamp could be used at The Maltapost Stand at The Riccione Stamp Fair also on Sunday 29th August. Sliema Stamp Shop prepared a special Exhibition Card (Exhibition Card No.1) to be used on its Stand at Riccione.



01 September - Richard J. Caruana's stamp design, submitted with the nom-de-plume "Jubilo" has won the Design Competition for a set of stamps to mark the 25th Anniversary of The Republic. The second and third placed designs were those with noms-de-plume "Galaxy" and "Asparagus" by Tony & Joseph Bugeja and Joseph Cassar respectively.

13 September - Backstamping of mail is being re-introduced by Maltapost plc with effect from to-day. The practice of backstamping was suspended in July 1998. However, during the Christmas period, normally between December 9th and January 3rd, backstamping will be suspended again because the exceptionally high volume of mail makes it impractical.

13 September - A machine stamp canceling slogan reading: "90th Anniversary/St.John Ambulance/Brigade" was used from the 13th to the 18th September at the Central Mail Room, Qormi Road, Marsa.

15 September - Attard Sub-Post Office at 16A, The Globe Stationery, Main Street, Attard, would be closed between Wednesday 15th and Thursday 23rd September, both dates inclusive. During this period the public could avail itself of postal services offered at Balzan Branch Post Office in Main Street, Balzan.

28 September - A Valletta Counter double ring metal datestamp, without code letter, has been released today at the Counter Hall, Dar Annona, Valletta. No notice or press release in this respect has been released by Maltapost plc.

30 September - Bulk posting services in Valletta started to be effected as from this day from the Casa Annona Branch on Castille Square.

06 October - Two new postage stamp sets were issued to-day. The first consisted of 2 se-tenant pairs commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Maltese uprising against the French, while the second set consisted of a souvenir Sheet and a stamp commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Coronation of the Image of Our lady o^z Mellieha. Both sets were designed by Joseph Mizzi.



A special handstamp was used to cancel both sets of stamps on the first day.

09 October - World Post Day. A special hand postmark was used at the Philatelic Window, Dar Annona, Valletta. The handstamp was inscribed "World Post Day/One World/One Postal Network/Valletta - 9.X.1999 - Malta".



09 October - A special hand postmark was used at the Counter Hall, Valletta, on October 9, 1999. The hand postmark was inscribed as follows: "9 - 10.X.99/XI/Trofeo Liguria/Spotorno/Maltapost Logo". The hand postmark was also used by Lorenzo Mantegna, the representative of Maltapost plc at the Spotorno (Liguria) Stamp Fair on the 9th and 10th October, 1999.



20 October - Part One of the new Definitive Set (Maltese Flora) was issued today. The values issued in this series are 2c, 4c, 6c, 16c, 25c, and 46c. The remaining 12 stamps in the new Definitive Set will be issued 6 stamps each year in 2000 and 2001. The stamps were designed by Maurice Tanti Burlo'. A special handstamp was prepared to cancel the new definitive stamps on the first day of issue.



22 October - Maltapost plc notified that a special handpostmark "Philatelia/Cologne/22-24,X.1999" was to be used at the Counter Hall, Valletta on October 22 and 23, 1999. The hand postmark was also used by the representative of Maltapost plc in Philatelia, Cologne Stamp Fair between Friday 22nd and Sunday 24th October 1999.



08 November - A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "10th Anniversary/The Malta Press Club/Founded November 1989" was used from November 8 - 13, 1999, at the Central Mail Room, Qormi Road, Marsa.

27 November - The "Christmas 1999" postage stamp set of four stamps was issued to-day. The stamps valued at 6c, 6c+3c, 16c+3c, 26c+3c were designed by Harry Borg. A special hand postmark was used for the cancelling of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.

Maltapost plc notified that the Post Office Counter at Maltapost Central Office in Marsa would be open to the public today, being the first day of issue for Christmas stamps. It had also notified that other postal service would also be available even though it was a Saturday, when normally the Post Office Counter would be closed.



09 December - In order to cope with the Christmas rush, Maltapost Branches in Malta and Gozo would also be open to the public between 2.30 pm and 5.30 pm between the 9th and 18th of December (except Sundays and Public Holidays) for normal Counter services.

10 December - A new postage stamp set of five stamps, commemorating the 25th Anniversary of The Republic of Malta was issued to-day. The stamps in the set (values - 6c, 11c, 16c, 19c, 26c) were designed by Richard J. Caruana.



A special hand postmark was used for cancelling philatelic mail on the first day of issue.

11 December - Maltapost plc reminds the public that:

- (i) the latest date for local pre-Christmas delivery is Saturday 18th December;
- (ii) the use of the Post Code is recommended;
- (iii) the profits from the surcharge on Christmas stamps are used to help children in need, so the public is urged to use Christmas stamps with the surcharge on them.

19 December - Maltapost plc notified the public that delivery of mail would also be carried out on Sunday 19th December.

24 December - Maltapost plc notified that the Valletta Counter at Dar Annona at Castille Square and the Branch at Malta International Airport would remain open until 12.45 pm on Friday 24th December, Christmas Eve.

31 December - Maltapost plc would like to notify the general public that Counter Services and distribution of mail would not be available on Friday 31st December. Sub-Post Offices in Malta and Gozo would be open during their normal business hours.

Have you paid your membership fee for 1999 and 2000

Please send immediately your subscription to:

Mr J. Buttigieg

Treasurer

“Miriam House” Zerafa Street, Marsa HMR 14, Malta