

MALTA – A DIARY

January – December, 1997

by J. Farrugia

09.01

The Bulk Posting Section was transferred from the General Post Office in Merchants Street, Valletta to the Central Mail Room at Castille Place with effect from January 9, 1997.

20.01

The forty designs that participated in the Stamp Design Competition “200 years as Cities (Zabbar, Zejtun, Siggiewi)” were exhibited at the Counter Hall, Posta Ltd. The exhibition was open from Monday 20 to Wednesday 22 January. Richard J. Caruana won the competition.

27.01

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: “Dun Pawl Micallef – Filantropu Ghawdxi – 1897-1997” was used at the Central Mail Room from Monday, January 27 to February 1, 1997.



31.01

A special handstamp was used at the Victoria Branch Post Office, Gozo, inscribed as follows: “Dun Pawl Micallef – Filantropu Ghawdxi (1897-1997) 31 ta’ Jannar 1997, Victoria – Gozo – Malta”.

01.02

Posta Ltd notified that the new local rates of postage are: 6c for letters up to 50g; 4c for locally registered newspapers up to 100g and 50c for parcels under 1kg.

The postage rate of surface mail of letters to all European countries, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia shall be up to 20g – 10c, 20-100g – 23c; over 500g and up to 1kg – Lm2.50.

Air Mail rates to Zone “A” countries including the UK, Spain, Germany and Italy are 16c for letters under 20g, and 13c for each extra 20g.

In Zone “B” countries, including the USA, the cost is 22c for the first 20g and 17c for each extra 20g.

In Zone “C” countries, including Australia, the cost is 27c for the first 20g and 21c for each extra 20g.

In the Govt Gazette N° 16407 dated June 31, 1997, we also note the following rates amendments: Certificate of Posting – 10c, AR Cards (local) – 16c; AR Cards (foreign) – 26c; Express rate – 35c; Registration (local) – 20c, (foreign) – 30c; local minimum parcel rates – 50c.

07.02

A special handstamp was used at the Counter Hall, Posta Ltd, Valletta, on Friday, February 7, 1997, commemorating the 300th anniversary of the Election of Grand Master Ramon Perellos as Grand Master. The handstamp is worded as follows: "Gran Mastru Ramon Perellos — 7-2-1997 — 1697-1997 — Valletta — Malta".



12.02

Posta Ltd notified that local designers were being invited to take part in a postage stamp design competition organised by the Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. The postage stamp was to be issued on July 23, the day designated as Letter Writing Day in Japan. Final acceptance day – March 25, 1997.

20.02

New Postage stamp set issued today, commemorating 200 years since Zabbar, Siggiewi and Zejtun have become Città Hompesh, Città Ferdinand and Città Beland respectively. Stamp values 6c, 16c and 26c and Miniature Sheet were designed by Richard J. Caruana. A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



20.02

The 5c denomination from the Christmas 1996 postage set was voted the best commemorative stamp issued in 1996. The stamp was designed by Harry Borg.

07.03

Posta Ltd notified that the 1c stamp (Definitive Issue) has been reprinted and may be bought from the Valletta Counter and from the Branches in Malta and Gozo.

12.03

New handstamps have been put in use at the Qrendi and Siggiewi Sub-Post Offices with effect from Wednesday, March 12, 1997. The metal hand date stamps are inscribed: "Qrendi S.P.O. — Malta" and "Siggiewi S.P.O. — Malta".

17.03

The Sub-Post Office in Marina Street, Marsascala, was temporarily closed between March 17- 30, 1997, both days inclusive. During this period the public was advised to call at the Zabbar BPO.

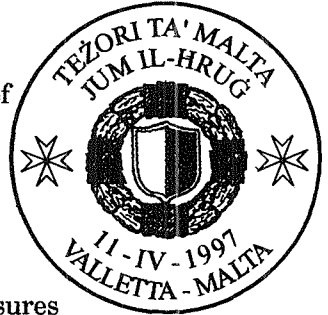
10.04

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "Euro Mediterranean —

Conference – Malta – 15-16 April 1997” was used at the Central Mail Room, Valletta from April 10 to 16, 1997.

11.04

The “Treasures of Malta – Sedan Chairs” postage set of four stamps, designed by the Design Section, Posta Ltd., was issued today. A special hand postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



11.04

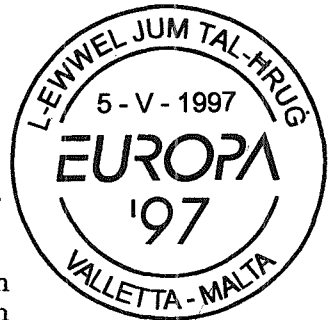
A Maximum Card depicting the 6c stamp of the ‘Treasures of Malta – Sedan Chairs’ set was issued today. It shows ‘Is-Suggetta’ belonging to Cottoner Grandmasters, Raphael and Nicolas, and preserved at the Zabbar Sanctuary Museum.

21.04

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: “Valletta – History and Elegance – Festival – 21-26 April 1997” was used at the Central Mail Room during the Valletta Festival (April 21-26, 1997).

05.05

The “Europa 1997” postage stamp set of two stamps was issued today. The theme for the Europa stamps was ‘Stories and Legends’. Stamps were designed by Joe Mallia. A special handstamp was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



07.05

A commemorating Postal Card (N° 18) was issued on the occasion of the participation of Posta Ltd in Naposta '97 (Stuttgart) Philatelic Exhibition, from May 7-11, 1997. The card has imprinted thereon the two stamps of the Europa 1997 postage stamp set and the logo of the exhibition. The postmark was also used at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO between May 7-11, concurrently with that used at the Malta Post Office Stand at Naposta '97. The special hand postmark is inscribed as follows: “Naposta – Stuttgart – 97 – 7-11.V.1997” and also included the Posta Ltd logo.



12.05

The Philatelic Bureau of the Posta Ltd Administration moved to the new Posta Ltd Headquarters at the ex-Central Supplies Building in Qormi Road, Marsa.

29.06

A Temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the International Fair of Malta, Naxxar, from Sunday, June 29 to Sunday, July 13.

Postal articles posted at this Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked by a special date-stamp inscribed as follows: "40th International Fair of Malta — Naxxar - Malta".

40th INTERNATIONAL
FAIR OF MALTA

10 JUL 1997

NAXXAR MALTA

10.07

The "Anniversaries 1997" postage stamp sets were issued today. Three commemorative covers were issued to be used with the three sets of two stamps each, but one special handstamp was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue. The sets commemorate:

(1) Joseph Calleia (filmstar), 100th Anniversary from his birth — 6c and 22c

(2) Antonio Sciortino (sculptor), 50th Anniversary from his death — 1c and 16c

(3) Gozo Cathedral 300th Anniversary, 6c and 11c.

The stamps were designed by the Graphic Design Section, Posta Ltd. The special handstamp was also used at the International Fair of Malta Temporary Branch Post Office at Naxxar.



17.07

A special hand postmark was used at the Counter Hall of the Post Office in Valletta today to mark the 200th Anniversary of the election of Hompesch as Grand Master. The handstamp is inscribed as follows: "Elezżjoni ta' — Granmastru — F. von Hompesch — 1797 17.VII.1997 — Valletta — Malta".



09.08

The Qrendi Sub-Post Office at "Best Mark", Rokku Buhagiar Street, Qrendi, will be closed from Saturday, August 9 to Saturday, August 23, 1997.

11.08

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

Mgarr (Malta) Sub-Post Office at 'St. Bees Stationery', 6 Jubilee Esplanade, from Monday, August 11 to Tuesday, August 19, 1997;

Ta' Xbiex Sub-Post Office at 'Fleet Stationers', Triq Testaferrata, from Monday, August 11 to Saturday, August 16, 1997;

Tarxien Sub-Post Office at 'Forex Stationery', 16-17 Misrah is-Suq, from

Monday, August 11 to Saturday, August 23, 1997.

16.08

The Ghaxaq Sub-Post Office was to be closed temporarily from Saturday, August 16 to Friday, August 29, 1997

23.08

The Dingli Sub-Post Office was to be closed temporarily from Saturday, August 23 to Saturday, August 30, 1997.

25.08

The Fgura Sub-Post Office was to be closed temporarily from Monday August 25 to Saturday, August 30, 1997.

29.08

Posta Ltd used a special cancelling handstamp inscribed: "Riccione — Malta Post Office — 29-31.VIII.1997" at the Counter Hall, Valletta, on Friday and Saturday during office hours. An identical handstamp was available at the Sliema Stamp Shop Stand at Riccione, Italy, between August 29-31. Mr Joe Buttigieg was appointed to represent the Postmaster General for the occasion.



29.08

The office of the Postmaster General notified that a Postage Stamp Design Competition was to be held to select the four stamps of the Christmas 1997 stamp issue. The designs were to be submitted by not later than 1.00pm of Friday, September 26, 1997.

02.09

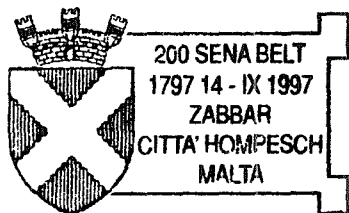
The Office of the Postmaster General issued the latest posting dates for Christmas mail.

12.09

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "Jum il-Wirt Ewropew — Il-Qalba tar-Rahal Malti — Lejn Harsien u Tisbieh — 12 ta' Settembru 1997" was used at the Central Mail Room in Valletta between Friday 12 and Thursday 18 September, 1997, except Sunday.

14.09

A special hand postmark was available to cancel stamps at the offices of the Zabbar Council on Sunday, between 0800 and 1100 on the occasion of the 200th Anniversary of the proclamation of Zabbar as Città Hompesch.



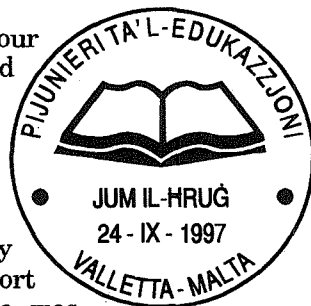
Envelopes with stamps affixed were also accepted for registration. The special hand postmark is inscribed as follows: "200 Sena Belt — 1797 14.IX.-1997 — Zabbar — Città Hompesch — Malta".

22.09

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "VII Simposju Internazzjonali — Dwar San Guzepp Rabat — Malta" was used at the Central Mail Room, Valletta, between September 22-28, 1997.

24.09

The "Pioneers in Education" postage stamp set (four stamps), designed by Debbie Caruana Dingli was issued today. A special handstamp was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.

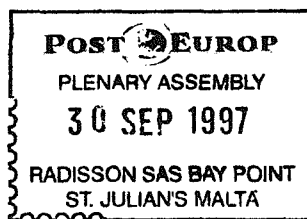


30.09

The Office of the Postmaster General informed the public that on the occasion of the Post Europ Plenary Assembly held at the Radisson SAS Bay Point Resort Hotel, St Julians, a Temporary Branch Post Office was opened on Tuesday, September 30, 1997 from 0830 to 1800 and on October 1, 1997, from 0830 to 1300 at the Conference Venue. A special hand postmark was used on both dates, worded as follows: "Post (logo) Europ — Plenary Assembly — 30 Sep. 1997 — Radisson SAS Bay Point — St Julians Malta".

The Counter Services available were those normally available at all Branch Post Offices and included:

- Sales of postage stamps and postal stationery
- Mailing of letters and letter packets
- Sale and encashment of Money and Postal Orders
- Registration of letters
- Registration of Postcheques
- Philatelic sales
- Telecard sales
- EMS Datapost



03.10

The Postmaster General notified that a special hand postmark "Juniorphil '97" was to be used at the Counter Hall, Valletta, on October 3 and 4, 1997. The hand postmark is inscribed as follows: "Merano — Juniorphil '97 — Meran — Malta Post Office — 3-5.X.1997".

The hand postmark was also used by the representative of the office of the Postmaster General at the Juniorphil '97 philatelic exhibition at Merano, between October 3-5, 1997.



20.10

The Office of the Postmaster General notified that the Parcel Post Office and the EMS Datapost Section previously operating from Valletta are now operating from the new Administration Block at 305 Qormi Road, Marsa (next to Wands). Normal hours of service will apply.

22.10

The Bulk Posting Service moved to 305 Qormi Road, Marsa, with effect from today.

27.10

The Central Mail Room was transferred to 305 Qormi Road, Marsa with effect from today. The metal hand postmarks in use will be the following:

- (1) Central Mail Room – Malta
- (2) Philatelic Bureau – Malta
- (3) Postage Paid – Malta

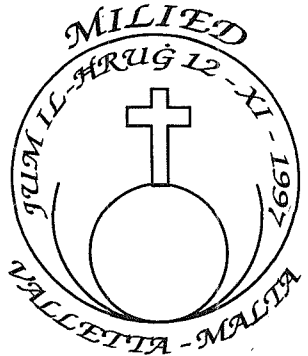
The machine postmark will carry the legend “CMR – Malta”.

03.11

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: “Le Meridien Phoenicia – Commemorating – The Hotel’s 50th Anniversary” was used from November 3-8, 1997, at the Central Mail Room, Qormi Road, Marsa.

12.11

The “Christmas 1997” postage stamp set of four stamps was issued today. The stamps were designed by Harry Borg. A special hand postmark was used for the cancelling of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



17.11

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: “Hamsin Sena – Ghaqda Kazini – Tal-Banda” was used from November 17-22 at the Central Mail Room, Qormi Road, Marsa.

24.11

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: “Gimgha – Xjenza U – Teknologija '97 – 24-30 Ta' Novembru” and logo, was used from November 24-30 1997 at the Central Mail Room, Marsa.

24.11

With effect from today the Valletta Postmen's Section was moved from Victory Square Valletta to 75 Old Bakery Street, Valletta, to serve the Valletta and Floriana District.

04.12

It was notified that no post to Canada was being accepted for the time being because of a postal strike in that country.

05.12

The "Commemorations 1997" postage stamp set of four stamps, designed by the Graphic Design Section of the Post Office, issued today. A special hand postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.

19.12

The Maltese postal authorities are once again accepting post to Canada with immediate effect, as the postal strike there has now ended.



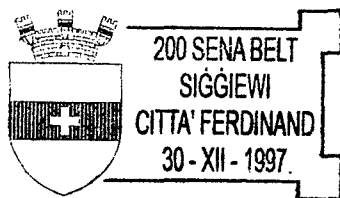
22.12

The Year Pack N° 10 was issued today. It features old Malta picture postcards on the outer cover and consists of a descriptive colour folder in four languages — English, French, German and Italian. The Year Pack contains all these stamps issued during 1997 mounted in clear acetate strips.

A postcard which may also be bought separately, is included in the Year Pack. The postcard depicts the 16c stamp of the issue commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Victoria Lines.

30.12

A special hand postmark was used at the Siggiewi SPO on December 30 1997 only, on the occasion of the 200th Anniversary of the proclamation of Siggiewi as Città Ferdinand. The special hand postmark was used during normal office hours and is inscribed as follows: "200 Sena Belt — Siggiewi — Città Ferdinand — 30-XII-1997".



Special envelopes and cards were prepared by the Siggiewi Local Council for the occasion.

Errata:

Vol.27/2-3 August-December 1998

Page21 (Diary)

The date 19.08.96 should be 12.08.96

The date 02.09.96 should be 19.08.96

The date 30.08.96 (slogan) should be 02 – 09 – 96

Page 28: Perforation of Margins:

Issue Y: In the 5 c value, the top margin of Pane A is imperforate, whilst the other three margins of this same Pane are all perforated.