

DETAILED INFORMATION OF NEW ISSUES

by
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CHRISTMAS ISSUE 1978

Date of Issue	9th November 1978.
Values	1c + 5m, 5c + 1c, 7c + 1c5 and 11c + 3c.
Stamp Size	1c + 5m, 5c + 1c, 7c + 1c5 = 27mm x 33mm. 11c + 3c = 61mm x 25mm.
Art Designer	Chev. Emvin Cremona.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	1c + 5m, 5c + 1c, 7c + 1c5 = 13.9 x 13.75 11c + 3c = 13.6 x 13.45.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalk Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

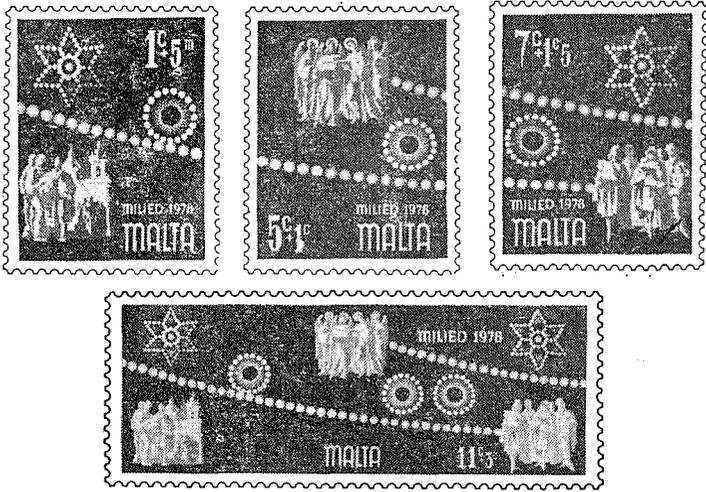
Colours

The colour of this set was produced by printing in multicolour, using five different colours for the 5c + 1c stamp and six different colours for the other three values.

Designs

This is the fifteenth set of Christmas stamps, and as in the case of the previous nine Christmas issues, each stamp includes a surcharge in addition to the postal value. The proceeds from this surcharge will be distributed amongst child welfare philanthropic organisations and charitable institutions by a Government appointed committee.

This year's set features Christmas street lights and decorations in Malta. Several streets are illuminated with fairy lights and colourful motifs during the Christmas period. The Government encourages the organisations through an annual competition based on the colour scheme, movement of lights, Christmas motifs and the general aspect of the decorated streets. The 1c + 5m stamp represents peasants playing the tambourine and the bagpipe with a village church in the background. The 5c + 1c stamp depicts a choir of Angels, and the 7c + 1c5 stamp shows boys and girls singing Christmas carols. The 11c + 3c stamp reproduces the other three stamps in a whole composition.



Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin next to the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes of the 5c + 1c value, but next to the last stamps, of the two bottom rows, in all Panes of the 1c + 5m, 7c + 1c5 and 11c + 3c values. In the values 1c + 5m, 5c + 1c and 7c + 1c5, the colour checks from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from right to left, in all three Panes of each value. In the 11c + 3c value, the colour checks from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right. There is only one Pane for this value.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in black.

The Printed Sheets of the 1c + 5m, 5c + 1c and 7c + 1c5 values consisted of three Panes, "A", "B" and "C". Stamps of these values are of the vertical format. The Printed Sheet of the 11c + 3c value consisted of only one Pane, "A". Stamps of this value are of the horizontal format. Each Pane of these four values has fifty stamps, made up of ten rows of five stamps.

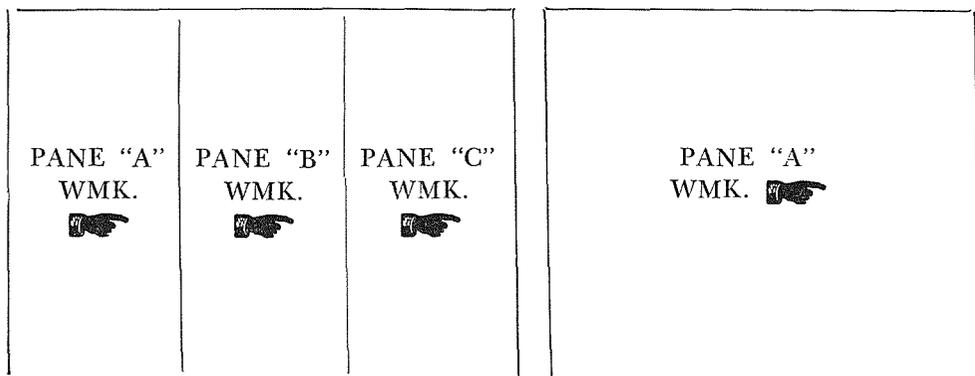
Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of each value.

- 1c + 5m = 1A x 6, 1B x 6, 1C x 6.
- 5c + 1c = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5.
- 7c + 1c5 = 1A x 6, 1B x 6, 1C x 6.
- 11c + 3c = 1A x 6.

Perforation of Margins

The top margins of Panes "A", "B" and "C", in the 1c + 5m, 5c + 1c and 7c + 1c5 values, are imperforate. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins, of Panes "A", "B" and "C" of these same values are fully perforated. In the 11c + 3c value, which has only Pane "A", the top margin is imperforate, whilst the other three are fully perforated. No registration marks were seen when all Panes of all values were examined.



From a study of all the details given, the Printed Sheet, of the three lower values, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown above, on left, whilst the Printed Sheet for the high value, would look as shown on right. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, stamps will be seen the right way up. Hence why, when individual stamps are examined, the watermark will be seen sideways.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row, in the lower three values. There is a 1mm horizontal line, between but no such line in the 5c + 1c value. In the high value, the Imprint reads, the words "LIMITED" and "MALTA" in the 1c + 5m and 7c + 1c5 values, "PRINTEX MALTA LIMITED", and is also seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black in all values. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks. A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. It is inscribed with the words, "L-EWWEL JUM TAL-HRUG", and the name of the respective locality, together with the date "9 Nov 1978". The postmark also incorporates a decorative star. Sales from this set, up to 4 p.m. on the first day of issue, amounted to £M36,132.