

THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY
OF MALTA

THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF MALTA

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FOREWORD

The philatelic happenings during the early part of the year have been varied and important. At the March meeting, the Acting Postmaster General, Mr. George W. Borg, was guest speaker, proposing closer relations between the Malta Post Office and the Society. In April, two members participated in the International Philatelic Exhibition, "Espana '75" and obtained very good results. During the same month, the International Federation of Philately, discussed the Society's application for affiliation to the world body and it is presumed that our Society has been accepted as a member. At the May meeting, we were honoured by the presence of Dr. Kenneth R. Clough, who displayed and talked about his impressive collection of Malta.

Meanwhile the near future would be equally important. March 1976 will see The Philatelic Society of Malta through its tenth Anniversary, and with less than a year away, preparations are already in hand to mark the occasion appropriately. A sub-Committee has just been formed to initiate and schedule a programme. It is formed by Dr. J. H. Mercieca, chairman, Ted Collins, secretary and Nick A. Cutajar. The Committee will be able to co-opt members and it is the wish of the committee that members come forward with suggestions and assistance so that a proper programme can be formulated. All suggestions are to be forwarded to the Secretary of the sub-Committee, Mr. T. Collins, "Villa Gloriana", Hope Street, Mosta.

Members' Interests

After the publication of the complete list of members, it was felt opportune to undertake the publication of a complete list of members showing their particular philatelic interests; members have been requested to enter their interests on the appropriate forms, provided by the Society on various occasions. The majority of members have obliged promptly, but there are still about forty members who are not in our files. With this issue, we are attaching a separate form intended for those who have not yet registered their collecting interests. Kindly fill in and forward to the Editor at your earliest.

Meanwhile, Mr. Stephen Stanaway, has been compiling the details in hand and started work on a comprehensive system of coding, whereby each member is assigned a code, which interpreted on the key, to be published soon, would give the whole range of interests for every member. The coding system, provides a cross-reference, which will be used for future additions and amendments. The intended coding-system is so built up that it allows for this.

It is intended to publish this member's interests list in the next issue of the magazine, so an early reply on your part, would facilitate compiling on the Editor's part. Members who have taken up new fields are also invited to up-date their listing.

The Editor.

The Postal Services and the the U.P.U.

The establishment of the post office and the postal services are not just a century and a half old, as many may be inclined to believe, for even in Scriptural times, there already existed arrangements for the quick carrying and delivery of messages from remote parts to different chief towns of the times. Going through the Scripture, one finds numerous references to primitive postal systems and amongst these we find a quotation by Job that his days were fleeing away swifter than "a post". Yet another reference that "One post shall run to meet another and one messenger to meet another, to show the King of Babylon that his city is taken at one end" is to be found in Jeremiah, chapter 51.

Cyrus the Great had a complete system of messengers. Saddled horses stood ready at a day's journey apart to carry him tidings from the remotest parts of his empire. All the earlier postal systems were intended primarily for the transmission of government reports. Private persons depended on special messengers or entrusted their communications to travellers going that way. The emperor Diocletian is praised for permitting government couriers to carry letters for private persons. Charlemagne maintained a postal service between the larger cities for his vast empire. The earlier Universities of Europe appear to have had postal systems of their own. Beginning with the thirteenth century, the University of Paris had a regular system of carrying letters and moneys for its students to and from all parts of the civilised world.

The early introduction of the public postal system is usually attributed to France. A public system of posts was founded on June 9th, 1464 by an edict of Louis XI.

In Great Britain, in 1591, Queen Elizabeth issued a proclamation prohibiting the transfer of letters between countries except by authorised messengers. With the accession of James I to the throne, communications between England and Scotland became more frequent. In the year 1603 the lawful charge for horses for the use of those riding post haste was fixed at two and a half pence a mile. The keeper of each post was required to have no less than two horses in readiness for the conveyance of government dispatches. These letters were not to be detained at any post more than a quarter of an hour. In 1635 a public post was established to between London and Edinburgh. At the same time other routes were established to Wales, Ireland and to other parts of England, in all eight main routes.

In 1680 a London merchant, William Dockwra, initiated the "London Penny Post". This service extended from Hackney to Lambeth and from Blackwell to Westminster. In 1784 a system of conveyance of letters by means of mail coaches was put into operation. The next great improvement was the postal reform of the period from 1836 to 1842.

The Act of 1839, by which the Treasury established a uniform penny rate for the whole of Great Britain was a direct result of the pamphlet "Post Office Reform" by Rowland Hill. He advocated a uniform penny postage throughout the United Kingdom so as to collect a revenue which would at

least cover the average cost of postage of a single letter. His plan proved quite successful and resulted in an increase in the volume of letters and a subsequent increase of revenue.

Later on the nineteenth century the establishment of other postal systems in the dominions, in America and in Europe followed each other in quick succession.

It was in 1874 that an international congress was held in Berne for the purpose of unifying the efforts of the different existing postal systems and create a postal union and thus Universal Postal Union came into being. One of the chief promoters was a German postmaster by the name of Dr. Heinrich Stephan.

This newly created postal union began to organise congresses for its members, which were held in different capitals of member states, throughout the world and up to the year 1969, sixteen congresses have been held during the hundred years of its existence. The first congress after its foundation, was held in Paris in 1878. Business connected with the improvement of the postal services were discussed and resolutions, to be later adopted by its members were taken. We find that at the first congress, the international parcel post was established and at the seventh Congress held in Madrid in 1920, the postal franking machines, (already in use in New Zealand since 1905) were generally adopted by the U.P.U.

For the sake of uniformity and expediency the U.P.U. recommended, not to say laid down, different colours of stamps for franking letters to different destinations and we find that the $\frac{1}{2}$ d green stamp or its equivalent in the currencies of other member countries were to be used for local postage whereas the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d in blue colour or its equivalent were to be used on letters destined for overseas countries. This arrangement was discontinued before the start of the Second World War.

Another important resolution adopted by the postal administrations throughout the U.P.U. is that each member state should send three specimens of every stamp, or set of stamps, postal stationery, reply coupons, etc., issued by every country to the postal administrations of every member state.

In 1909 the monument in memory of the foundation of the U.P.U. was inaugurated at Berne and this was the work of the artist Monsieur Rene de Saint Marceaux.

It is certainly worthy of mention that Malta was amongst the first to join the U.P.U. in the year 1875, followed by Gibraltar in 1876.

The first set of postage stamps with a U.P.U. theme was that issued by Switzerland on July 2nd, 1900, to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the foundation of the Union. This country, very aptly, as it houses on its territory the official seat of the Union, again commemorated the 50th Anniversary in 1924 with a set of three stamps in 1949, and in 1974 the centenary with another set of three stamps. In fact Switzerland is the only country to have commemorated, at twenty-five years intervals, the jubilees of the Union.

Up to the end of the first World War, when different countries, it seems, had not yet woken up to the great possibilities of the postage stamp as a means of propaganda as well as a source of revenue, the first six Congresses of the Universal Postal Union were left to pass philatelically "unhonoured and unsung", whereas all following ones from the seventh, held in 1920 at Madrid to the sixteenth held in 1969 in Tokyo have all been duly commemorated by a stamp or a set of stamps. Amongst these are included three rare and expensive sets of stamps of Sweden for the eight Congress, which incidentally was issued along with another set of the same number of stamps to mark the 50th Anniversary of the U.P.U. The set of 1929 of Great Britain to mark the 9th Congress has been registering fantastic rises in value and no doubt has a brilliant future.

In 1949 the 75th Anniversary of the Foundation of the U.P.U. was philatelically commemorated by all member countries and a truly omnibus issue celebrated the event. The first centenary of the U.P.U. fell in 1974 and this yet more important event has been befittingly commemorated by member countries and an omnibus issue celebrated the event.

Thus the Universal Postal Union was one hundred years old last year and I venture to state that it is one of the oldest, if not the oldest international organization in existence; a living monument to true collaboration and goodwill of people of different races, languages and creeds, continually doing a sterling service to the many millions of people throughout the vastness of our terrestrial globe.

Dr. J.H. Mercieca.

* In part this article is based on material published in the consolidated Encyclopedia, 1939.

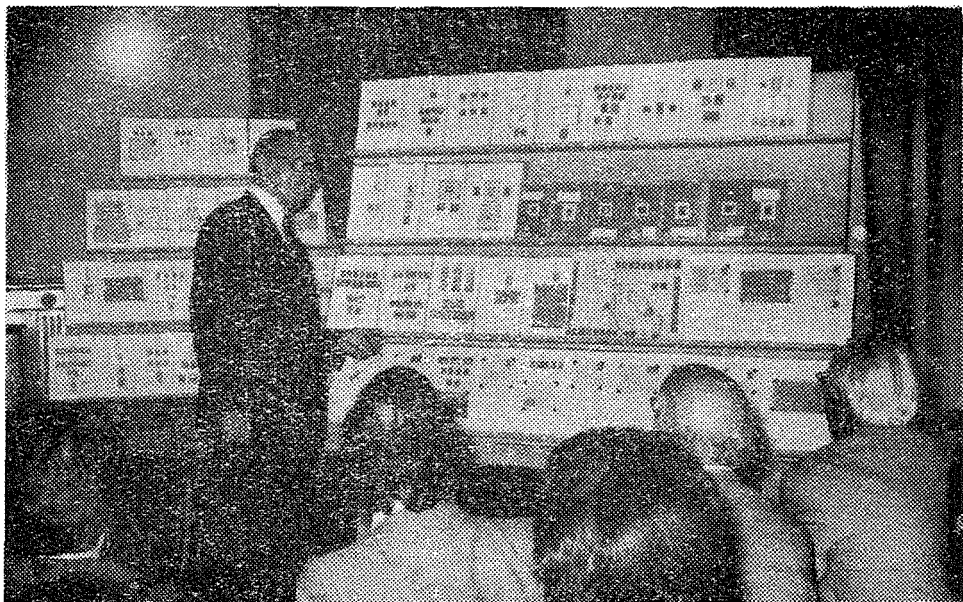
DR. K. CLOUGH'S VISIT TO MALTA

The monthly meeting of the Society for May was different from the usual meeting in that for the occasion we had a guest speaker who also displayed his specialised and vast collection of Malta. Dr. Kenneth Clough comes from the vicinity of Manchester and he is no new comer to Malta, having served here in 1945 as a Naval Medical Officer at Manoel Island and has since then visited Malta on four occasions.

It was during his stay in Malta in 1945 that he took a fancy for Malta stamps which he started collecting in earnest and in which he has maintained an unabated interest up to the present day.

Dr. Clough is a founder member of the Malta Study Circle, and in this connection, the President of the Society, Dr. J.H. Mercieca, in a welcoming speech before the meeting, held on Monday, 5th May, 1975, expressed pleasure in welcoming "amongst us members of the circle as I feel that these contacts between the two societies serve to further strengthen the ties of friendship and collaboration between us".

Dr. Clough has exhibited parts of his Malta collection at various Exhibitions in the United Kingdom. In 1970, he won a silver-gilt medal for his entry of Malta Proofs and Specimens at the British Philatelic Exhibition. For the same entry he won a silver medal at Philympia in the same year.



At Stampex 1969 he won a silver medal for his collection of the Malta ½d yellows. At Stampex, last year he also won a silver-bronze medal for his collection of G.B. stamps used in Malta.

At the meeting, the guest speaker displayed a wide range of his Malta collection, ranging from the early postal service of the Order of Knights of Malta up to early issues of Malta. No amount of space will do justice to Dr. Clough's remarkable display. Suffice to say that his opening "piece de resistance" was a 1603 letter written in old style french by Henry de Marles de Beauchamp, Knight of Malta, to his mother in Avignon, relating how he suffered heavy injuries in the fighting against the Turks. Other pages from his vast collection were related to the Crimean War Mail and Soldier's letters, Lazaretto markings, G.B. stamps used in Malta, complete 'specimens' sets as well as 'proofs', and studies of the Malta ½d yellow.

Members present at the gathering, could for the first time view some of the best examples of postal markings ever seen in Malta. And it is through these columns that we thank Dr. A. Bonnici, through whose initiative, Dr. K. Clough's visit to Malta was made possible.

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The Turkish-Cypriot Postal Administration

As you will probably know, there are two stamp issuing authorities on the Island of Cyprus, the Republic Postal Administration and the now independent Turkish-Cypriot Postal Administration. The following is all to do with this latter administration, that of the Turkish-Cypriot Postal Administration. This administration dates not, as many well-known journalists would have us believe, from July 1974, when the Turks invaded Cyprus, but dates from much earlier, in fact from January 1964. It was a direct result of the inter-communal fighting that broke out in December 1963, that the Turkish Cypriots set up their own postal service, the official date of which is 6th January 1964. To mark this independent service, the T.C.P.A. issued a special handstamp, with Turkish lettering, and the date 1.6.1964. At the same time another handstamp was issued with a star in place of the date. There are 11 different known handstamps used in various Turkish-Cypriot areas during this time. However, it must be made clear that the T.C.P.A. whilst controlling their own postal service, still used the official postage stamps of the Cyprus Republic... that is until April 1970. At that time the Turkish-Cypriot postal administration issued what are called Social Aid stamps, one of 5 mils and the other of 15 mils value. The basic idea, so the official explanation goes, was that the stamps were to be used as a means of collecting funds for the building of an Old Peoples' Home, and funds for helping Turkish-Cypriot refugees who had fled their villages to seek refuge in the larger Turkish-Cypriot towns and enclaves. The stamp, so I was told, were to be purchased and placed alongside the Republic postage stamps, the Republic stamps actually prepaying the postage rate. However, I have never seen a cover bearing both stamps, and can only presume that these stamps on their own were used to prepay postage... They were used on ordinary mail, registered mail, within and between Turkish-Cypriot towns and enclaves.

A special hand cancellation was used on these stamps, a long wavy single line, measuring 34mm, with the official handstamp of the post office used to date the cover. On the registered covers you will also note the use of the official Republic registered slip, and the registered handstamp. Of course for mail addressed outside the Turkish-Cypriot areas, stamp of the Republic had to be used. This set of two Social Security stamps was in common use up to the 29th October 1973, when the T.C.P.A. issued their first set of definitive stamps. This was a set of 7 different values, in the currency of Cyprus, ranging from 3 mils to 70 mils. There was also a first-day cover for these stamps, and specimen sets. These stamps replaced the Social Security stamps, but their use was again restricted to within and between Turkish-Cypriot areas. The Republic authorities having heard about this stamp issue, objected to the local UN commander, and it was reported in the Greek-Cypriot papers that a number of these stamps had been intercepted and destroyed, how much truth there is in this claim,

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First Decimal Definitive Issue (31st March)

All the values of this issue from 2m to 50c were printed in four panes to each printing sheet. The £M1 was also printed in four panes, but only stamps from three panes were issued, the other being destroyed because of a flaw. This step should be congratulated, because it has avoided a lot of speculation. The £M2 value was printed in two panes.

Plate/Pane numbers: All Plate numbers appear under the first stamp of the bottom row.

2m, 5c = 1A × 4 up to, and including 1D × 4

4m, 5m, 8m, 1c3, 4c, 50c = 1A × 5 up to, and including 1D × 5

1c, 2c, 3c, 7c5, 10c = 1A × 6 up to, and including 1D × 6

£M1 = 1A, 1B, 1D × 5

£M2 = 1A × 4, 1B × 4.

Up to the time of writing, four values have already had their first reprint. These are the 2m, 4m, 5m, and 1c values. It looks as if in each case the original Plate was again used, because the same Plate/Pane numbers were used, that is:-

Second Print

2m (January 1974) = 1A × 4 up to, and including 1D × 4

4m (September 1974) = 1A × 5 up to, and including 1D × 5

5m (January 1974) = 1A × 5 up to, and including 1D × 5

1c (November 1974) = 1A × 6 up to, and including 1D × 6

In the case of the 2m and 4m values very little difference in colour is noticed between the first and second printings. The best way I found to sort out which is which, is to look at the back of each block at a certain angle against a good light. It will be found that the watermark is different in sharpness, and I think that different kinds of paper were used for the two prints. In the first printing the watermark is more easy to see than in the second printing.

In the case of the 5m value, besides the sharpness of watermarks there is also a slight difference in shade of the main colour of the stamp. This can be easily observed when blocks or whole sheets are compared.

In the 1c value, besides a slight difference in shade of the light brown colour background, the sharpness of the watermark is seen better in the second print than the first.

Between the first and second printings of the above values I also noticed a slightly different position of the Plate numbers, especially the first number and letter of most Panes.

First Decimal Postage Dues (28th. April)

The printed sheet for each value was made up of four Panes, each with 50 stamps.

Plate/Pane numbers: All Plate numbers are found under the first stamp of the bottom row.

2m, 3m, 5m, 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c, 10c = 1A × 2 up to, and including 1D × 2.

One thing which seems to be common to all above Plate numbers is, that the first pair of numbers and letter is printed a bit lower than the second pair.

Imprint Blocks: The printers' name "Printex Ltd. Malta" is printed under the last two stamps of the bottom row. An Imprint Block of four also includes the colour checks, found in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp.

Europa 1973 (2nd. June)

This Europa set, like that issued in 1974, was again printed in small sheets of ten. In the 1974 issue the sheets were of the horizontal and vertical format, whilst in this 1973 issue, all values are of the horizontal format.

Plate/Pane numbers: There are eight panes for each value. All Plate numbers of all values, are under the middle stamp of the bottom row. The bottom row consists of three stamps only, so a corner block of four, from a small sheet of ten will also contain the Plate numbers.

3c, 5c, 7c5 = 1A × 3 up to, and including 1H × 3.

1A	1B
1C	1D
1E	1F
1F	1H

A study of all sheets shows, that each value has Panes B, D, F, and H with all four margins perforated, whilst Panes A, C, E, and G have the left hand margin imperforated and the other three margins perforated. The Printing sheet could have been laid out thus:-

Imprint Blocks: "Printex Limited Malta" is under the last stamp of the bottom row. Since as we said earlier, the bottom row has only three stamps, an Imprint Block of four will also include the Plate numbers, but not the colour checks. The colour checks are in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the first row.

International Anniversaries 1973 (6th. October)

Plate/Pane numbers: There are four Panes to each Printing Sheet for each value. each Pane has fifty stamps made up of five rows with ten stamps each. All Plate numbers are under the first stamp of the bottom row.

1c3, 7c5, 10c = 1A × 4 up to, and including 1D × 4.

Imprint Blocks: The printers' "Printex Ltd. Malta" is in the bottom margin below the last two stamps. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks, which are in the right hand margin next to the last stamp and the one above it.

Christmas Issue 1973 (10th. November)

A miniature sheet was also issued with this set. It has three stamps, one of each value, separately perforated, with the 8m + 2m on top, and the 7c5 + 1c5 at the bottom. No Plate numbers or Printers' Imprint appear on the miniature sheets.

Plate/Pane numbers: There is only one Pane for each value and all Plate numbers are printed under the first stamp of the bottom row.

8m + 2m, 3c + 1c, 7c5 + 1c5 = 1A × 5.

Imprint Blocks: "Printex Limited Malta" appears under the last stamp of the bottom row. An Imprint Block of four, will also include the colour checks, which are in the right hand margin next to the last stamp and the one above it.

Republic of Malta (Issue

Starting with this issue, detailed information will be given of new issues as they come out. If anyone thinks that other information, besides what is being given, might be of interest, please let me know and I shall do my best to include it for future issues. This is important, because all this information may serve as a basis for Study Papers later on. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Staff of the Philatelic Bureau for their interest and cooperation.

Date of Issue	31st March 1975.
Values	1c3, 5c and 25c.
Stamp Size	31mm x 44mm (all values).
Art Designer	Chev. Emvin Cremona.
Printers	Printex Ltd., Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	14.0 x 13.9 (comb).
Watermark	Maltese Crosses Pointing Sideways.
Colours	The colours of this set were produced by the multicolour process.

1c3 Design: Stamp shows the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister by the first President of the Republic in the presence of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

5c Design: Stamp shows the National Flag of Malta.

25c Design: Stamp shows the President addressing the public after the swearing-in ceremony. With him are the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

Colour checks are in the right hand margin next to the last stamp of the bottom row. In the 1c3 and 25c values, the top colour touches the perforations extending on the margin. These colour checks are in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter. The colours from top to bottom are the same as those used for Pane numbers from left to right in the 1c3 and 25c values. But in the 5c value, the colour checks from bottom to top correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right.

Cumulative totals are seen in top and bottom margins, above and below each column. Above and below the last column is seen the sum total of a complete sheet of fifty stamps. The figures used for these values are 2.5mm high, in the same colour as the Printer's Imprint.

There are two Panes of fifty stamps each — five rows of ten stamps — for each Printing Sheet of each value.

Plate/Pane numbers: These are found under the first stamp of the bottom row. The colours are in the same order from left to right as the colour checks from top to bottom for the 1c3 and 25c values and from bottom to top in the 5c value.

1c3 = 1A × 5, 1B × 5; 5c = 1A × 2, 25c = 1A × 5, 1B × 5.

The top margin of Pane "B" of all values is fully perforated.

The bottom margins of Panes "A" and "B" of all values are fully perforated.

The left hand and right hand margins of Panes "A" and "B" of all values are perforated with ten holes, with a little space, enough for two or three more holes, near the edges, not perforated.

A small part of a horizontal line, near the edges of the left and right hand margins, can be seen in Pane "A" of all values. The position of these lines is next to the first and last stamps of the top rows.

From a study of the perforations, Pane numbers and direction of watermark, it seems that the Printing Sheet for each value consisted of Pane "A" on top of Pane "B".

Imprint Blocks: The Imprint "Printex Ltd. Malta" is found under the last stamp of the bottom row. A block of four will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. It consisted of a ring formed by two concentric circles, the inner be-

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SOCIETY MEMBERS' SUCCESS AT "ESPAÑA '75"

Three entries submitted by Society members at "España '75", the World Philatelic Exposition, all gained awards. Mr. Anthony Fenech participating with a "Specialised Collection of Great Britain Stamps Used in Malta" has been awarded a Silver Medal, while Mr. Godwin Said, was awarded a Bronze Medal for his entry "A Collection of Postal History of Malta", both in the Competition Class. In the Literature Class, the local firm "Emmanuel Said — Stamp & Coin Dealers" has added another major award for its "Said Malta Stamp & Coin Catalogue 1975" (reviewed in Vol. 5.N.1), with a Silver Medal Diploma.

"España '75" was held in Madrid, Spain, under the auspices of the International Federation of Philately, from the 4th to the 13th April, 1975. The Exposition was housed within the Crystal Pavilion complex at the Fiera del Campo. The exhibition covered 131 countries and 23 Postal Administrations. In the Court of Honours, beside collections of prestige from Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Ranier III, 14 of the most notable international collectors were represented. The Special Class included forty Jurors' and Commission Members' collections as well as nine other invited guests' collections. All these exhibits were contained in approximately 6,000 frames of a 'new' design with a capacity of 15 sheets (5x3) as opposed to the conventional frames holding twelve or sixteen sheets.

The Crystal Pavilion is a monumental glass structure, which created its own particular problems. A special study was carried out of the atmospheric conditions within the glass pavilion. Solar radiation, heat exchanges, humidity and temperature fluctuations were studied and appropriate measures taken to safeguard the material on display.

"España '75" coincided with the 125th Anniversary of the first Spanish stamp. The method of pre-payment of the carriage charge of mail by using postage stamps was created in Spain by a Royal Order of the 24th October, 1849. The first stamp began circulation in the early part of the following year, and it was engraved on lithographic stone by Bartholome Coromina, who represented the image of Queen Isabella II, apparently inspired by the medal created by the Belgian artist J.A. Pringret. The stamps were printed by the National Mint and Stamp Factory, a firm closely related to the Spanish printing and minting works, dating back to the XVII century when "tax on stamped papers" was first introduced on the 15th December, 1630.

In 1950 the first Spanish stamp was 100 years old and to celebrate the centenary, an International Exhibition was held in Madrid. Ten years later, the First International Congress of Philately was held in Barcelona.

Today's International Federation of Philately (F.I.P.), the world body in the care of hobby, held its 44th International Philatelic Congress, on the 14th and 15th April, immediately after the closing of the Exposition. The Congress witnessed the most advanced dissertations by some of the best known philatelic personalities who spoke about all aspects of stamp collecting, postal and mail services history, and the technical elaboration as well as the conservation process of the postage stamp.

One important item on the F.I.P. 44th Congress Agenda was our Society's application for association with the Federation. The society had been invited to send a delegate to represent and forward the Philatelic Society of Malta, and supply details of the Society's activities. It is unofficially believed that Malta's application has been accepted.

In closing, we congratulate our two members, Anthony Fenech and Godwin Said, who through their enterprise, continue to sustain a high level among Maltese philatelists.

R.A.F.'s Souvenir Flown Covers

On 10 January the RAF, Luqa commemorated the 60th Anniversary of the Formation of No. 13 Squadron, at present stationed in Malta, with a specially flown souvenir cover, which forms part of the RAF Museum Squadron series.

The cover shows aircraft used by the squadron during its 60 years of operation, namely the BE2c (1915-1917); the Hawker Hector (1937-1939); and Canberra PR7 (1956 to date). The cover also carried descriptive details of the special flight and the squadron badge, and it bore a 1c3 Malta stamp of the then current Universal Postal Union issue, which appropriately depicts transport through the ages. The stamp was handstamped with the normal "VALLETTA" double-ring date-stamp.

The covers were flown by a Canberra WJ821 aircraft of No 13 (PR) Squadron from Luqa to RAF Eastleigh, Kenya, via Cairo, piloted by Wg. Cdr. J.B. Parkinson, and crewed by Flt. Lt. J.A. Ball and Flt. Lt. S.J. White. In Kenya, the covers were handed over to the Nairobi postal authorities who applied the philatelic Bureau handstamp on a 10c Kenya "shell" stamp, affixed to the lower-right corner on the back of the cover. The Covers were subsequently flown back to Malta via Khartoum, Sana'a, Yemen Arab Republic and Cairo.

Three types of covers were available, a normal cover, another autographed by the pilot and navigator, while a limited number of covers were personally autographed by Field Marshal Lord Harding, who presented the squadron with its standard. The proceeds from these covers will go to the RAF Museum at Hendon where are preserved historical aircraft used by the RAF since its formation in 1918.

No. 13 Squadron was formed at Gosport on the 10th January 1915, and moved to France in October of 1915, playing a distinguished part in the Battle of Arras. The squadron returned to England in March 1918, to be disbanded in December of the same year. On 1st April it was reformed and in October 1939 returned to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force. In May 1942, No. 13 took part in the first thousand bomber attack on Germany. When the German forces surrendered, in May 1943, the squadron undertook anti-submarine patrols. In January 1956 the squadron moved to Cyprus, after survey work of the Middle East and Africa. It took part in the Suez Campaign, and in September 1965 it moved to Malta, returning to Cyprus in January 1972. The squadron returned to Luqa, Malta, its present base in October 1972.

THE SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA

The Sovereign Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem, known also as that of Rhodes and of Malta was founded around the year 1000. It had its seat in Jerusalem up to 1291; in Cyprus from 1292 to 1310; in Rhodes from 1311 to 1523 and in Malta from 1530 to 1798. From that time it has resided in Rome and today its affairs are directed by His Highness Fra Angelo de Mojana in his capacity as the 77th Prince and Grand Master. As at the time of its inception, the Order today continues its work of mercy in a number of countries, dispersed throughout all the continents, where it has founded hospitals and has been responsible for their running. Ambulances, mobile dispensaries, clinics, blood banks, medical research centres and motorised units for emergency relief work in the case of disasters, form part of the programme of the humanitarian activities of the Order. The international executive committee in aid of Leprosy victims in Geneva — founded by the Order — today extends its activities in about 30 countries.

A very good number of countries recognise the Order of Malta as a Sovereign State and between these and the Order exist full diplomatic relations with exchange of Ambassadors and accredited Ministers.

Poste Magistrali

The Postal Administration of the Order was instituted on the 20th May, 1966 after a Decree of the Grandmaster which was approved by the Sovereign Council of the Order. The first set of stamps was released on the 15th November, 1966.

The value of the stamps is expressed in the currency of the Order, i.e. Scudi, Grani and Tari. The approximate sterling equivalent is Scudo = 12 Tari = 240 grani = 32 pence.

Bilateral Postal Convention Between Malta And The Order

On the 4th March, 1975 the Postal Administration of the Republic of Malta and that of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta signed a bilateral Postal Agreement which stipulated that:—

- (a) The Postal Administration of Malta undertakes to carry to destination in its territory correspondence originating from the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and franked with the stamps of the Order.
- (b) The Postal Administration of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta undertakes to carry to destination in its correspondence originating from Malta and franked with Malta Stamps.

In the execution of the abovementioned undertaking both Postal Administrations have agreed to abide and be guided by all the Acts or Regulations of the Universal Postal Union to which they have already adhered to or may be acceded to by them in the future.

Under this agreement stamps of the Order, affixed on correspondence addressed to Malta, are being cancelled on transmission with a date stamp showing the date of transmission and the words POSTE MAGISTRALI. On the first day of issue of sets of stamps of the Order there will be added a cancellation stamp showing the words PRIMO GIORNO D'EMISSIONE with the Emblem of the Order in the centre.

The Postal Administration of Malta is delivering at destination in Malta this correspondence after back-stamping it in the usual manner.

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REVIEW

MALTA POSTAL RATES

(Malta Study Circle, Study Paper No. 39; 29pp, illustrated)

The Malta Study Circle has recently published a study paper on Malta Postal Rates. The contents is the result of research work by some of the Circle's members and reports on items in other members' collections and auction catalogues.

The study tries to trace all types of postal rates from the time of the Knights in Malta to the present day. It deals with the changes in the early years, external, internal, seamen and soldiers Privileged rates; surface and air; newspaper, parcel, registration and express rates. The field covered is very vast and as expected it lacks details in parts.

The study is very comprehensive and detailed with regards to rates connected with the U.K.. Fees and charges to other countries are not so documented and detailed. Rates resulting from bi-lateral Conventions effecting Malta mail would have been more than welcome. Fees levied on mail to and from the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Papal States, the Kingdom of Sardinia and France would have rendered a greater contribution to Malta's Postal History.

One could explain this situation by the fact that research on the continent is not so easy as that in U.K. in view of the fact that the greater part of the Circle's members reside in Great Britain.

The contents of the paper is in most parts very objective; based on official notices and information. Gaps have been filled with knowledge gleaned from existing covers although a warning is sounded that such information "is insufficient to enable a firm conclusion to be drawn". More interest from members may fill such details as Parcel Post Rates, the full implementation of the Standard Penny Post Rate at the turn of the century and the slow resumption and expansion of air mail service after the Second World War. These details and the "field of further study" could be filled if the paper is divided in parts and members "adopt" an item and work on it.

Such Study Paper is an indication of the interest of the members of the M.S.C. have to acquire and broadcast any information on the various aspects of Malta Postal History.

Carmel G. Bonavia

Continued from page 10

ing 23mm in diameter and the outer 32mm. In the upper part of the ring is written "L-EWWEL JUM TAL-~~HRUG~~ 31-3-1975" and in the lower part the name of the Post Office where the stamps are cancelled. Written horizontally across the inner circle are the words "MALTA REPUBBLIKA".

The Philatelic Bureau also provided specially designed envelopes and Souvenir Folders.

Continued from page 6

no one really seems to know. On 15th July last year there was an Army led coup which toppled the Makarios Government, and resulted in Archbishop Makarios leaving the island... earlier the Army controlled radio had claimed that the President was dead. On the morning of Saturday 20th July, in the early hours, the Turkish Army invaded Cyprus at Kyrenia and the adjacent area. There was wide spread confusion, but although Famagusta and Nicosia were bombed, by the 24th July a certain amount of normality had returned, and on the 27th July 1974, the Turkish-Cypriots banned the sale of the Republic postage stamps in the Northern Turkish controlled areas. So from this date the TCPA stamps were for the first time used on outgoing mail. One thing I did forget to mention was that when the stamps were issued on the 29th October, '73, all the main Turkish-Cypriot post offices were issued with new handstamps with Turkish wording for Nicosia, Lefkosa, for Famagusta, Magusa, for Larnaca, Larnaka and so on... to date these handstamps have been noted for Lefkosa, Magusa, Larnaka, Lefka, Baf (Paphos)... and after the Turks had control of Kyrenia in July a Girne handstamp came into use Girne (Kyrenia). Gibbons have now catalogue listed these stamps in February's "Stamp Monthly".

One interesting side issue to all this is that from July 27th, the postal addresses of all the Turkish controlled Northern area of Cyprus became officially Mersin 10, Turkey. Further to all this, on 13th of February, 1975, the Turkish controlled area became the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus and two values of the 1973 definitive issue were released with the Turkish wording for the new state. There are indications that all the ex-Greek villages in the northern area are being renamed with the Turkish equivalent.

Ted Collins

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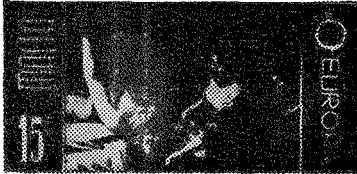
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