

**Journal of**

**THE MALTA PHILATELIC SOCIETY**

# Gold

**2019 ISSUE**



## MELITA Gold MALTA



Following the successful launch of the Melita Gold Bullion Coins in 2018, the Central Bank of Malta, in collaboration with Lombard Bank, has now launched the 2019 issue in 1oz. The coin is struck by the PAMP mint of Switzerland.

Melita coins are legal tender and classed as investment gold, and their price is based primarily on the spot price of gold on the international markets. **This bullion coin is exempt from any Value Added Tax.**

The 2019 issue of the 1oz coin bearing a face value of €100 has been limited to only 400 coins. The design is identical to the 2018 version with the exception of the year of issue.

The obverse and reverse of the coins respectively display a personification of Malta inspired by the Edward Caruana Dingli postage stamp of 1922 and the coat of arms of the Republic of Malta.

Each coin is officially certified and housed in an individually numbered sealed card that both protects and certifies the coin within. Scanning, using an iPhone app, will authenticate the coin itself.



Real size illustrations

TECHNICAL DETAILS:

Weight	31.103g (1oz)	Alloy	Fine Gold 999.9
Diameter	34mm	Quality	Proof-like
Face Value	€100	Thickness	1.78mm
Edge	Milled	Mintage Limit	400 coins

\* subject to international gold prices



BANK ĊENTRALI TA' MALTA  
CENTRAL BANK OF MALTA

in collaboration with



**LOMBARD**

Lombard Bank Malta p.l.c.

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# THE MPS JOURNAL

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Silver USA. NEW YORK 2016 ~ Silver PHILATAIPEI 2016

Silver BANDUNG 2017 ~ Silver BRAZIL 2017

Large Silver ISRAEL 2018 ~ Large Silver THAILAND 2018



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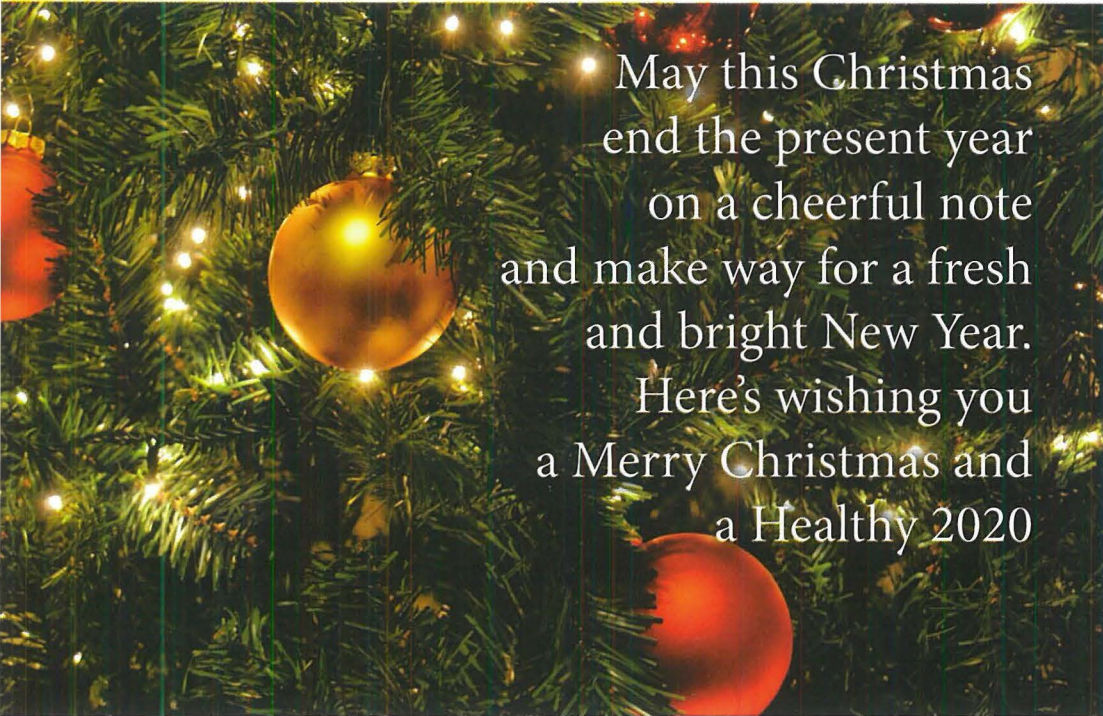
December, 2019

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May this Christmas  
end the present year  
on a cheerful note  
and make way for a fresh  
and bright New Year.  
Here's wishing you  
a Merry Christmas and  
a Healthy 2020

**AGM to be held on  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 @ 6pm  
at Capuchin Priory, Floriana**

**Please remit your membership dues for 2019   
immediately**

**to Mr John Cardona, 56 Triq Santa Marija - Tarxien TXN 1703**

Membership dues are as follows:

Local Members:

(Adults) - Eur 10.00 • (Junior Members) - Euro 3.00

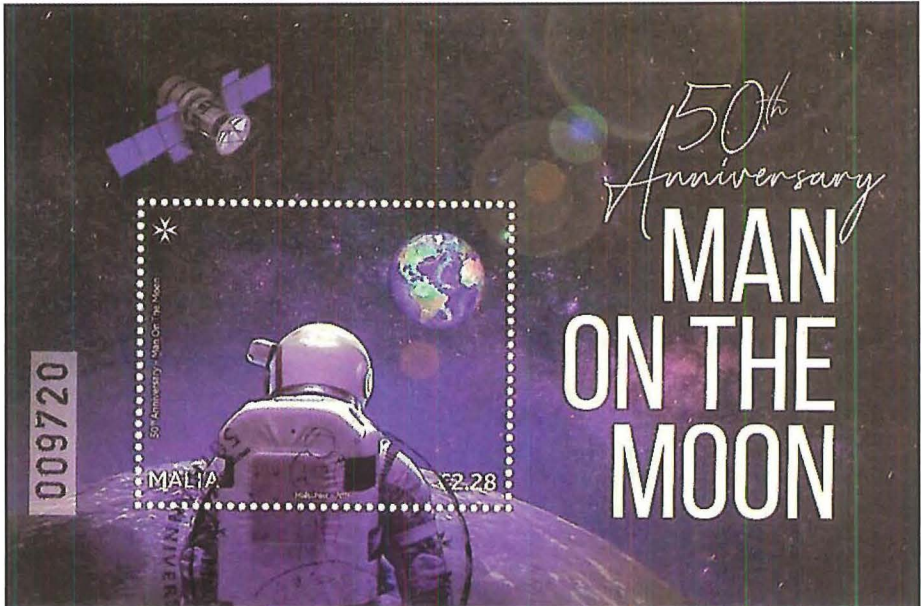
Overseas Members:

Australia - Aud 40.00 • Canada - Cad 30.00 • U.S.A. - US\$ 21.00  
• Euro Countries - Eur 20.00 • South Africa - US\$ 31.00 • U.K. - GBP 15.00

# THE CONQUEST OF SPACE

## 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE MOON LANDING

CARMEL LINO CUTAJAR



Since time immemorial Man has been fascinated by the mysteries of space and what lay outside our Earth. Suddenly, the sum of man's accumulated knowledge burst forth with a velocity that was awesome. In the course of 30 years centuries of learning became focussed on man's dreams of adventure in space. What had seemed unattainable became reality when on 20 July 1969 Man set foot on the surface of the Moon.

**“One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind”**

As Man became more sophisticated and curious he tried to figure out what was happening outside the earth's atmosphere

## RENAISSANCE-ERA

### SCIENTISTS WHO STUDIED

### THE UNIVERSE.



Maldives 1973

#### **NICHOLAS.COPERNICUS**

(1473-1543). Polish mathematician and astronomer, known for his **HELIOCENTRIC THEORY** (the sun, not the earth, is the centre of the universe).



Malta 2009.

#### **GALILEO.GALILEI**

(1564-1642). Italian. Referred to as **"THE FATHER OF OBSERVATIONAL ASTRONOMY"**. He used the telescope to observe celestial objects. His support of Copernicus' theories conflicted with orthodox religious beliefs and he was declared a heretic. He was forced to recant and live in home confinement.

## 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY



Fujeira.1971

#### **JOHANNES KEPLER**

(1571-1630). German astronomer and mathematician best known for his **Laws of Planetary Motion:**

*"all planets move in an elliptical orbits with the sun as our focus".*



Yemen 1970

**ISAAC NEWTON (1643 – 1727).**  
Famous English astrologer and mathematician who formulated the **Laws of Motion and Gravitation.**

# PIONEERS OF MODERN ROCKETRY

One of the biggest early problems to consider in the endeavour to conquer space was the problem of how to propel an object out into space. This taxed the brain of several pioneers. Among them are:

## KONSTANTIN TSIOLKOVSKY

*Russian pioneer of space exploration.*

He is credited as being the first to study in detail whether rockets could achieve speeds necessary for space travel. In 1903 he published an ideal rocket equation (named after him), a mathematical equation which describes the motion of vehicles using thrust to expel an object with high velocity. He hinted at the exploration of space: *“Earth is the cradle of the mind, but one cannot live in the cradle forever”*.

## ROBERT H. GODDARD

*Father of Modern Rocketry. First fluid-fuelled rocket.*

American scientist. In 1919 he published *“A Method of Reaching Extreme Altitudes”* using calculations that could also be used to land a rocket on the moon. People thought he was an eccentric and labelled him the “Moon Man”. However he continued to work on the quiet. He revolutionized conventional technology by replacing solid propellant with combustable fluids. He secretly built a 10 foot rocket with its engines above propellant tanks, which he launched from a field in his aunt’s farm. It successfully rose to a height of 40 feet. This would be the basis of future rockets. He wrote:

*“In no case must we allow ourselves to be deterred from the achievement of space travel, test by test, and step by step, until one day we succeed, cost what it may.”*



K. Tsiolkovsky. Russia  
1986.



R. H. Goddard. USA 1964

# PIONEERS.

## HERMAN OBERTH (1894 – 1989)

*Romanian/German scientist.*

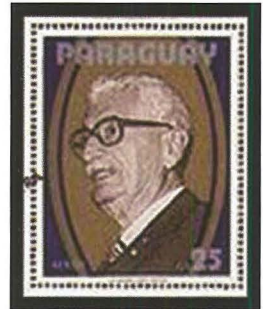
In 1923 he published a classical book “*The Rocket into Interplanetary Space*”, followed in 1929 by “*Ways to Space Flight*”. In these works he explained the mathematical theory of rocketry and discussed the possibility of constructing space stations for travelling to other planets. His contribution was theoretical but valid for future experimentation .

## WERNHER von BRAUN (1912 – 1977)

*Development of Ballistic Missiles.*

In Jules Verne’s “From the Earth to the Moon” the space capsule is fired from earth into space orbit by a gigantic cannon, which in reality would have flattened everyone in the craft. How to do this effectively and safely needed the brain of some genius. This came in the form of Wernher von Braun, a student of Herman Oberth.

Wernher von Braun was a German, and later American, aerospace engineer. In his early thirties he worked in Nazi Germany as a highly acclaimed rocket development specialist. He developed the dreaded V-2 rocket which hit London and other allied areas in World War II. His great talent was well known to the allies. At the end of the war instead of being prosecuted as a Nazi official he was secretly whisked off to the U.S.A. along with hundreds of other German scientists to liase with American scientists in the development of ballistic missiles. He developed the powerful Saturn V rocket that propelled the Apollo XI spacecraft to the moon.



H. OBERTH. Paraguay  
1971



von BRAUN and  
Saturn V rocket. Yemen



SATURN V ROCKET



# MAN'S CONQUEST OF SPACE

## 1957: USSR: LAUNCH OF FIRST ARTIFICIAL SATELLITE IN SPACE

The development of ballistic missiles by Germany towards the end of World War II paved the way for the launch of vehicles that would fuel a space race between the Soviet Union and the USA.

### OCTOBER 4, 1957: SPUTNIK I

The Soviets launch the first artificial satellite, SPUTNIK I, into space.



SPUTNIK 1  
*East Gemany 1957*

### NOVEMBER.3,1957: SPUTNIK 2

One month later, the Soviets launched SPUTNIK2 which carried a dog, named LAIKA, the first animal in space. She survived several orbits but died a few hours after the launch. Sputnik 2 did 2500 orbits in 162 days



SPUTNIK 2 with dog  
LAJKA on board  
*Hungary 1975*

### **MAY 15, 1958: SPUTNIK 3**

Main objective was to carry out scientific research of near space. At the time the Soviets had secret military ambitions in their quest to conquest space.



**SPUTNIK 3.**  
**Cuba 1958.**

### **AUGUST 19, 1960: SPUTNIK 5.**

Launched with two dogs on board, **BELKA** and **STREIKA**, the first animals to return safely from earth orbit



**SPUTNIK 5 . Inset the two dogs  
Belka and Streika.**  
*Russia 1960.*

### **FEBRUARY 22, 1966.**

Two dogs, **VETEROK** and **UGOLYOK**, were launched into space and returned safely after 22 days in orbit.



**Space dogs: Veterok &  
Ugolyok.**  
*Russia 1966.*

# MAN'S CONQUEST OF SPACE

## 31 JANUARY, 1958: EXPLORER I AMERICA LAUNCHES ITS FIRST ARTIFICIAL SATELLITE IN SPACE.

Following the successful launch by the USSR of the first two satellites (Sputnik I and II) in orbit, the Americans launched their first satellite, EXPLORER 1, on 31 January 1958 from Cape Canaveral, the USA's participation in the Inter Geophysical Year. This would be the first of a number of EXPLORER missions.

The main scientific instrument on EXPLORER I was a cosmic ray detector designed to measure the radiation environment in Earth orbit. It also provided the first photos of earth from orbit.



**EXPLORER I.**  
*Poland 1958*

## NATIONAL AERONAUTIC AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NASA was established in 1958 to keep U.S. space efforts abreast of recent Soviet achievements, such as the launching of Sputnik. In the early 1960s the two super powers raced to become the first country to put a man in space and return him to earth. The Soviets won the race when, in April 12, 1961, they launched cosmonaut YURI GAGARIN into space. The Americans quickly responded by launching ALAN SHEPHERD into space one month later.



# THE RUSSIAN VOSTOK PROGRAMME

The VOSTOK PROGRAMME was a USSR spaceflight project to put the first Soviet citizens into low Earth orbit and return them safely. Competing with the USA project MERCURY it succeeded in placing the first human in space, YURI GAGARIN in April 1961.

## VOSTOK ACHIEVEMENTS

### 1961 VOSTOK 1: YURI GAGARIN

*First man in space*



Vostok 1. Yuri Gagarin.  
*Maldives*

### 1961 VOSTOK 2: GHERMIN TITOV

*First person to spend over. 24 hrs and sleep in space*



Vostok 2. G. Titov.  
*Russia*

### 1962 VOSTOK 3 & 4:

*First dual manned spacecraft, launched a day apart and came ..within 6.5 km of one another and communicated via radio*

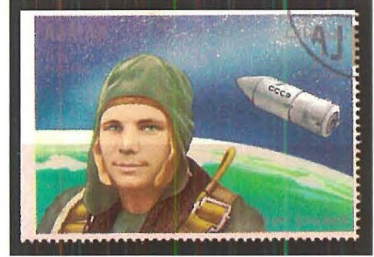


Vostok 3 & 4 In tandem

# MAN IN SPACE

## FIRST MAN IN SPACE IN EARTH ORBIT

12 April 1961. VOSTOK 1  
*YURI GAGARIN (Russian)*



Ajman. Yuri Gagarin

6 August 1961. VOSTOK 2  
*GHERMAN TITOV (Russian)*  
The first manned flight over 24 hours.  
*Titov was the first man to sleep in space*



Czech. Rep. Gherman Titov

16 June 1963. VOSTOK 6  
*VALENTINA TERESHKOVA (Russian)*  
*First woman in Space.*



Cuba. Valentina Tereshkova

# RUSSIAN VOSTOK PROGRAMME (CONT)

## VOSTOK ACHIEVEMENTS:

### 1963 VOSTOK 5:

JOINT MISSION OF APPROXIMATION WITH VOSTOK 6. Launched 14 June 1963. Com. Valery Bykovski. 5 days in space.



VOSTOK 5. Val. Bykovski Russia



### 1963 VOSTOK 6:

FIRST WOMAN IN SPACE.  
VALENTINA TERESHKOVA



VOSTOK 6



VOSTOK 6 Maldives  
VALENTINA TERESHKOVA

# FIRST AMERICANS IN SPACE.

**5 May 1961. MERCURY “FREEDOM 7”**

**ALAN SHEPHARD,**

The first American astronaut (and second person after the Russian Gagarin) to travel in space, but did not reach orbit.



**20 Feb 1962. MERCURY “FRIENDSHIP”**

**JOHN GLENN.**

The first American to achieve orbital space and return safely to earth. The flight lasted just under 5 hours.



The **MERCURY SPACE PROJECT**

was America's first manned spacecraft. It was a small capsule which could only accommodate one person. Powered by an Atlas rocket.

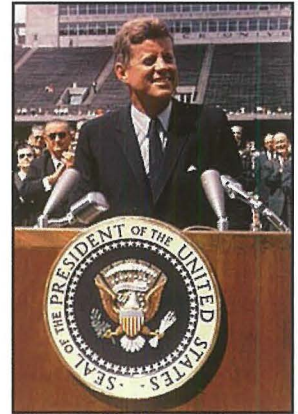


**MERCURY CAPSULE**

# “WE CHOOSE TO GO TO THE MOON”

President John F. Kennedy.  
Sep. 12, 1962

When John F. Kennedy became President the USA was losing the space race with the Soviet Union which had already put the first man, Yuri Gagarin, in space in 1961. Kennedy stood before Congress and proposed that **“the US should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth”**. Despite some reservations Congress approved the launch of the APOLLO programme (at a cost of some \$22 billion).



*Pres. Kennedy  
Rice Univ. Sep 12, 1962*

On September 12, 1962, a warm and sunny day, President Kennedy delivered his speech before a crowd of about 40,000 people in the Rice University football stadium. Inter alia, he stated:

**“We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard; because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because the challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to win”**

His goal was fulfilled in July 1969 with the successful Apollo 11 Moon landing, but he did not live to see it (he was murdered in 1963). The Apollo Project remained a memorial to him.





# FIRST MEN TO WALK IN SPACE (1965)

**ALEXEI LEONOV (USSR)**  
18/ 19 March 1965.  
(with P. Belyayev on VOSKHOV 2)



Leonov in space. Voskhov 2 capsule. *Hungary.*

**EDWARD H. WHITE (USA)**  
3/7 June 1965  
(with James McDivitt on GEMINI 4)  
Edward White died two years later  
(1967) when Apollo 1 blew up before  
launch



White walking in space using a hand-held maneuvering unit to propel himself. *Hungary.*

# AMERICA'S PROJECT GEMINI

Following on the Mercury project GEMINI's objective was the development of space travel technology to support the future Apollo mission to land men on the moon. Among its achievements were the ability of astronauts to work outside the spacecraft and pioneering the manoeuvres for space rendezvous and docking.

## GEMINI 4 (July 1965)

EDWARD WHITE: FIRST AMERICAN TO WALK IN SPACE

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*Hungary.* GEMINI 4.  
ED. WHITE

## GEMINI 6 & 7 (December 1965)

PARALLEL FLIGHTS WITH ORBITAL RENDEZVOUS.  
(no docking)

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*Hungary.* GEMINI 6 & 7.  
RENDEZVOUS

## GEMINI 8 (July 1966)

FIRST ORBITAL DOCKING BETWEEN TWO SPACECRAFTS



*Hungary.* GEMINI 8.  
ORBITAL DOCKING

# AMERICA'S APOLLO PROJECT



*“REACHING FOR THE MOON”*

The **Apollo project**, launched in 1967, was designed by NASA with a view to landing the first man on the moon, something which it succeeded in doing in July 1969 (Apollo 11) and subsequent Apollo flights up to 1972. Apollo used Saturn rockets as launch vehicles.

## APOLLO 1 DISASTER 1967

### **Crew:**

Gus Grissom,  
Roger Chaffee,  
Ed White

These three astronauts **died on January 27, 1967** when a blaze erupted in their command module during pre-flight testing in preparation for the first manned Apollo flight.

The disaster left families in mourning and a nation stunned.



*Romania 1972: “Astronaut Heroes”.  
The unfortunate crew of Apollo 1.  
Grissom-Chappelle-White*

# APOLLO PROJECT

## 1968 APOLLO 8

Launched from Cape Kennedy 21  
December 1968.

Crew:

*Frank Borman (commander)*

*James Lovell*

*William Anders*

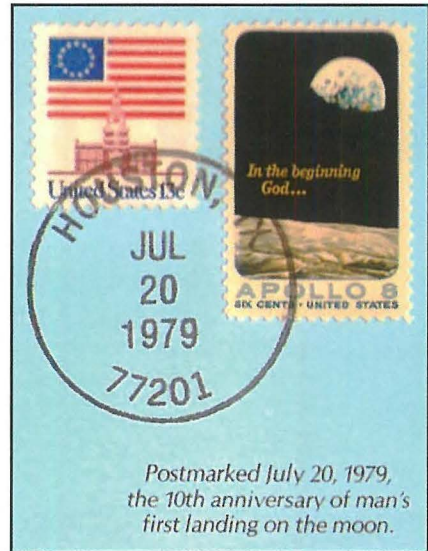
Apollo completed 10 lunar orbits

On Christmas day Anders read from  
the Bible:

*“In the beginning God created  
Heaven and Earth”*

Borman sent Christmas greetings:

“From the crew of Apollo 8. Good  
luck, a merry Christmas and God  
bless you all – on the good Earth”



*USA stamp (10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of moon landing).  
Shows the ‘Earth rise’, a photo taken by Apollo  
8 commander, Frank Borman, from lunar orbit  
showing planet Earth floating in the sky.*

# APOLLO PROJECT

**1969 (May 10). Apollo 10**

Crew: *Thomas Stafford (commander), G. Cerman, J. Young*

**Objective:** Apollo 10 was the fourth American manned mission designed as a ‘dress rehearsal’ for the first moon landing, testing all the components and procedures and descending very close to the surface of the moon short of actually landing. Mission duration: 8 days.



*Apollo 10*

*Lunar lander  
"Snoopy"*

*Redocking of lander  
and mother ship*

*Ras Al Khaima. Apollo 10..*

# APOLLO PROJECT

## 1969 (JULY 16). APOLLO 11

### FIRST MANNED LANDING ON THE MOON

**Launched:** 16 July 1969 from Kennedy Space Center.

**CREW:** *Neil Armstrong (mission commander), Buzz Aldrin, Michael Collins*  
**MOTHER SHIP:** "COLUMBIA". **LUNAR LANDING MODULE "EAGLE"**

NASA worked meticulously to reach the stage when man could attempt to land on the moon. Apollo 10 had been a "dress rehearsal". Still there were some high risks, e.g. the lunar module escape from the moon surface was untried and there were no emergency plans should the astronauts be stranded on the moon surface. Nevertheless the decision was taken to proceed. Fortunately all went to plan and the astronauts re-entered and landed on Earth on July 24, 1969 off Hawaii.



APOLLO 11. Mother ship (COLUMBIA) and Lunar landing module (EAGLE) moon descent and ascent and re-docking

Splash down off Hawaii

# APOLLO PROJECT

1969 (JULY 20). APOLLO 11

FIRST MEN ON THE MOON



USA commemorative stamp postmarked July 20, 1979, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the moon landing



ASTRONAUTS:  
*Top:* Armstrong  
*Bottom:* Aldrin and Collins

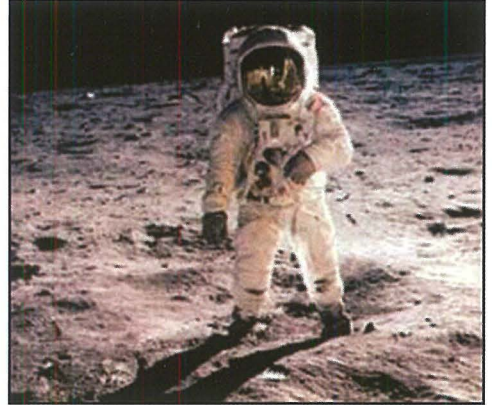
On 20<sup>th</sup> July 1969, the lunar module (“Eagle”) with Armstrong and Collins inside, separated from the mother ship (“Columbia) and descended smoothly towards the moon surface. Armstrong had to take manual control in the last few feet and landed safely. **“The Eagle has landed”** he announced to Earth.

# MEN ON THE MOON.

20 JULY 1969.



**APOLLO 11 ASTRONAUTS:** *Armstrong, Aldrin, Collins.*



**NEIL ARMSTRONG: THE FIRST MAN TO STEP ON THE MOON SURFACE:** *“That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind”*



**BUZZ ALDRIN: SECOND MAN TO STEP ON THE MOON SURFACE.**  
*Photo taken by Armstrong.*



*The astronauts' footprints will last on the moon surface forever because there is no wind to blow them away.*



# APOLLO PROJECT

## 1971. APOLLO 15

LAUNCHED: 26 JULY 1971.

Mission duration: 295 hours (12+ days)

**Objective:** Apollo 15 was the first lunar mission to use a motorised roving vehicle (“ROVER”) to explore the moon’s surface. Many scientific manoeuvres and specimen collections were carried out.



APOLLO 15. James Irwin on the rocky moon surface saluting the American flag. Behind him is the Lunar Module (“Falcon”)



APOLLO 15. The first lunar Rover in action.  
Crew: David Scott, James Irwin, A.N. Wordena

# APOLLO PROJECT

1972. APOLLO 17

LAUNCHED DECEMBER 1972.

The last Apollo mission to land on the moon.

The duration of the mission was 12.6 days. The time on the lunar surface was 75 hours.



SHARJAH. APOLLO 17. Harrison Schmidt was the first trained geologist to walk on the moon and Eugene Cernan, commander of Apollo 17, the last man to do so (December 14, 1972).

# ON GOING RUSSIAN SPACE PROGRAMME

1969.

## SOYUZ 4 & 5.

First docking between two manned craft in earth orbit and exchange of crews beautifully illustrated in a postal 10th anniversary set from Cuba (1979)



Rocket launch

Soyuz 4 & 5 in orbit

Docking procedure

# SOVIET “MOONWALKER”

## LUNOKHOD PROGRAMME



*East Germany. Lunokhod . Moon rover*

LUNOKHOD was a series of Soviet robotic rovers designed to land on the moon between 1969-1977.

The Lunokhods were transported to the lunar surface by LUNA spacecrafts launched by Proton-K rockets.

They successfully carried out many important experiments on the lunar surface.

# RUSSIAN LUNA PROGRAMME

(USSR 1959-1976)

The **LUNA PROGRAMME** was a series of **robotic space crafts** sent to the moon by the Soviet Union which accomplished many firsts in space exploration, performing many experiments, studying the moon's chemical composition, gravity, temperature and radiation. **Twenty four Luna spacecrafts** were formally acknowledged although there were probably many more.



**LUNA 16**  
*Russia 1970*



**LUNA 17**  
*Hungary 1975*



**LUNA 24**  
*Cuba 1978*

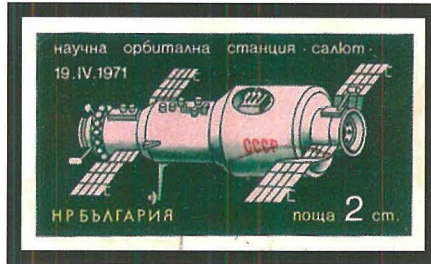
**LUNA 16**  
16 Sep. 1970  
**Collected the first  
flight to the moon**

**LUNA 17**  
15 November 1970  
**Carried the first  
samples from  
space rover**

**LUNA 24**  
9 August 1976  
**The last LUNA  
Russian robotic**

# 1971. THE FIRST SPACE STATION

## SALYUT 1 (USSR)



SALYUT 1. The first space station  
Russia 1971

April 19, 1971.

The Russians launched SALYUT I the first unmanned space station.

June 6. Three Russian astronauts were launched on SOYUZ 11.

They successfully docked with SALYUT and remained on the space station for 3 weeks (383 orbits). Unfortunately disaster struck when Soyuz was re-entering earth when a ventilation valve was jolted open, depressurizing the interior and **all three astronauts died tragically.**

Despite an array of problems, SALYUT 1 made important progress toward living and working in space and paved the way for future space stations.



SALYUT 1.  
*Cuba*



SOYUZ 11 docking with SALYUT 1  
*Maldives*

# 1973. SKYLAB

## AMERICA'S FIRST SPACE STATION

SKYLAB was the first United States space station, launched without crew by NASA, powered by a Saturn V rocket, on **14 May 1973**. It included a workshop, a solar observatory, and several hundred life science and physical experiments including photographing the Earth.

Subsequently Skylab was visited by several astronaut crews on Apollo rockets.

The launch of Skylab almost ended in failure as during the launch the station was damaged when a protective shield tore away taking one of the main solar panels with it and leaving the other one jammed at the side. This deprived Skylab of most of its electrical power and also removed protection from intense solar heating, threatening to make it unusable. It took all the expertise of the first Apollo crew to arrive on site to install a new heat shade and to free the jammed solar panels to save Skylab.

Skylab did almost 35,000 orbits and was occupied for 171 days. It was brought back to earth on 11 July 1979 when it disintegrated over the Indian Ocean and Western Australia.



**SKYLAB. Note only one solar panel as the one on the other side was damaged and tore away.**

# INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN SPACE

## FIRST AMERICAN-SOVIET MANNED SPACE MISSION

### APOLLO---SOYUZ XIX (JULY 1975)

For many years the USA and Soviet Union had been locked in a grim and costly race for military applications of space technology. The time was now ripe for a better option of cooperation and sharing of technology for possible future international rescues in space.

On 15 July 1975, SOYUZ XIX blasted off from Russia and APOLLO from Cape Canaveral USA. Two days later the two spaceships, while moving at 17,000 miles per hour, successfully linked up. The two commanders Stafford (Apollo) and Leonov (Soyuz) slowly crawled into the docking module and shook hands, a historic meeting of the two super powers.



17 JULY 1975. RENDEVOUX SOYUZ XIX AND APOLLO  
(L) East Germany (R) POLAND



# THE SPACE SHUTTLE (1981-2011)

NASA designed the Space Shuttle as a reusable low Earth orbital spacecraft, designed to transport people and cargo (such as satellites and building parts for the International Space Station) and to be able to return to the Earth's surface.

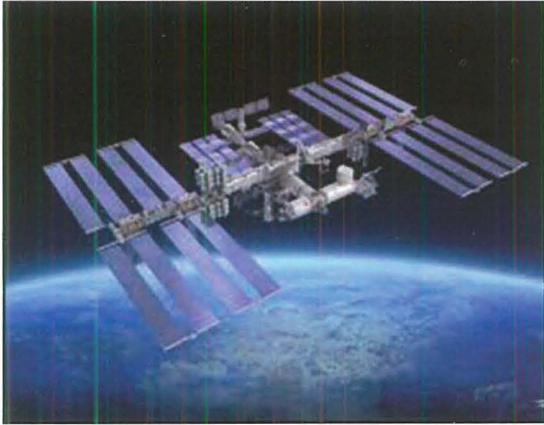
The shuttle consisted of three components: a winged orbiter and two solid rocket boosters (both reusable) and an expendable external fuel tank.

Between 1981 and 2011 five shuttle crafts were launched: COLUMBUS (1981, *blew up killing all seven crew*); CHALLENGER (1982), DISCOVERY (1983, *carried the Hubble space telescope*); ATLANTIS (1985); ENDEVOUR (1991). The project was decommissioned in 2011.



Shuttle launch – Booster jettison (reusable) -- external fuel tank jettison (expendible)

# THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION



The **International space Station (ISS)** is a habitable space station in low Earth orbit, a joint project between five participating space agencies: NASA (USA), Rocosmos (Russia), ESA (Europe), JAXA (Japan), and CSA (Canada). **Launched in 2000** it is still very active and serves as a research laboratory suited for the testing of spacecraft systems and equipment and other experiments.

The Space Station consists of pressurized habitation modules, structural trusses, solar arrays, radiators, docking ports, experiment bays and robotic arms. It has been visited and lived in by visitors from various countries and maintains an average altitude of 400 kilometres, circling the earth every 92 minutes.



# SELECT MALTA MAIL OF THE FRENCH NAVY IN WW1

Giovanni Bonello

When the first world war loomed inevitable in 1914, the two main Allies, Great Britain and France, agreed to share and divide their maritime spheres of responsibilities. France would be the foremost actor in the Mediterranean, while Great Britain would assume military leadership in the Channel, the Atlantic and the North Sea. For the duration of the war, the British Mediterranean fleet acted under the supreme command of a French Admiral, and the French navy followed British orders in the North. The cooperation between the two navies was fraught with major difficulties, misunderstandings and rivalries, but survived the duration of the war.

The powerful French warships moved base from Toulon to Malta, and arrived, to great popular excitement and festivities, in the Valletta harbours on August 11, 1914, just before the formal declaration of war.

One aspect that distinguished the two fleets in Malta was censorship. While the British authorities enforced a total ban on photographing British shipping in the harbours for fear of security breaches, no such restrictions seem to have hit French warships in the Malta harbours. Photos of British ships in Maltese waters taken during the war are almost impossible to find, while images of French warships in the Malta harbours abound.

The stationing in Malta and its harbours of thousands of French naval personnel for a protracted period impacted the postal services in considerable ways, mostly in two directions: the commercial possibilities of a new postal market were no way overlooked. Publishers seized the opportunity to flood Malta with literally hundreds of new postcards designed exclusively to attract maritime buyers: French patriotic images, messages in French – some publishers actually pre-printed FM (Franchise Militaire, roughly the equivalent of On Active Service) in the stamp corner on the back of the postcard. French-dedicated war postcards form an especially attractive niche in the Melitensia collectors' world.

But, besides the commercial bonanza for publishers and retailers, the massive presence of thousands of foreign seamen anxious to correspond with their far-away families and friends created logistic problems and called for new practical solutions in the mail systems. The French postal authorities rose to the occasion.

Plenty of valuable research has already been devoted to these new challenges and how they were met. It seems the unexpected, and massive, workload did not disrupt unduly the smooth workings of the French and Maltese postal services operating from Malta. Although the island was pivotal to the Entente Cordiale

powers in WW1, it remained far from the frontline theatres of war, and was thus spared the impact and horrors of actual destruction and death. For how the French postal system worked in Malta at the service of the French naval forces in WW1, I recommend a number of studies.<sup>1</sup>

This feature is meant to illustrate a few items (there are thousands!) representative of the philatelic collecting interests relating to that period. No way does it claim to be exhaustive.

The French fleet rather suddenly left Malta half-way through the war, in the summer of 1917, and relocated to Argostoli in the Ionian islands. No official explanation was given as to why Malta could no longer be considered a safe or welcome port. But something decisive must have prompted such a drastic move. Some incidents of violence and disharmony between French personnel and Maltese inhabitants are recorded, but nothing unduly serious.<sup>2</sup> A source attributes this decision to leave Malta to the alarming rate French sailors were succumbing to venereal disease transmitted by Maltese prostitutes.<sup>3</sup>

© Giovanni Bonello, 2019

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<sup>1</sup> R(obert) E(dward) Martin, *Malta, The Stamps and Postal History*, London, 1980, pp. 205 – 206; Giovanni Bonello, “Malta and the French Postal Services in World War One” in *The PSM Magazine*, Vol. 22 no 2/3, August/December 1993, pp. 6 – 15; Giovanni Bonello, “Malta and the French Navy” in *Histories of Malta*, Vol. 4, Malta, 2003, pp. 145 – 163; Alan Green et, *Malta in World War 1, Postal History*, Malta Study Circle, 2013, pp. 169 – 193; Roger G. Evans et, *Malta in World War 1, Photographic Postcards*, Malta Study Circle, 2014, pp. 89 – 112.

<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Bonello, “French Sailors in Malta during WW1”, in *The Sunday Times of Malta*, June 11, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Debono, “French Navy moves from Malta to Greece” in *The Sunday Times of Malta*, September 24, 2017.

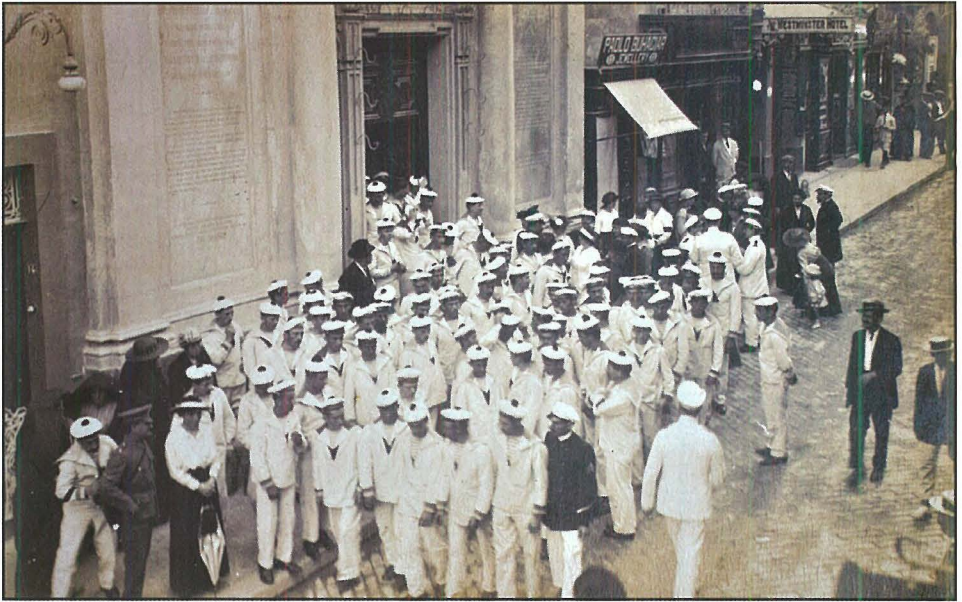


Fig. 1  
French sailors and officers leaving Mass service in St Barbara's church, Republic Street, Valletta. This was the official church of the French armed forces for the duration of WWI. A marble plaque inside commemorates this French connection.

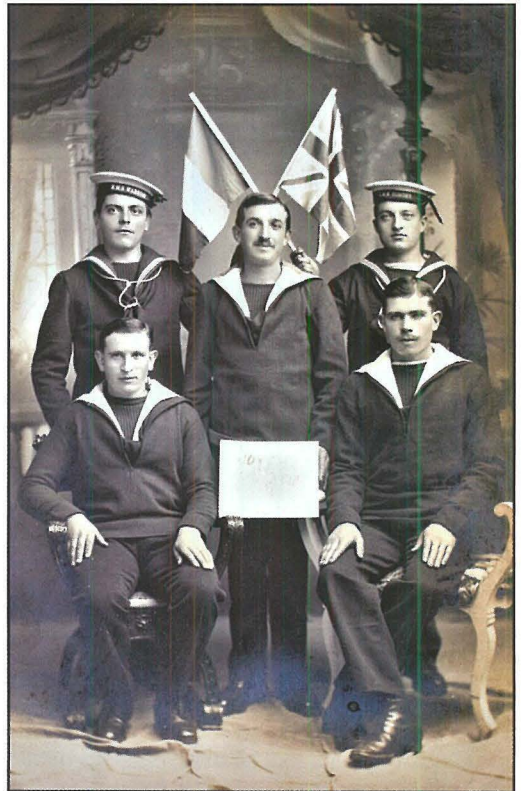


Fig. 2  
French and British sailors share a group photo under the Union Jack and the Tricolore. This photo was taken by Chretien & Co, at the Empire Studio in Republic Street, Valletta. This spirit of fraternity between the two allied services recurs in scores of war photos taken in Malta.



Fig. 3

Patriotic postcard “*Saluts de Malta*” showing Marianne waving the French flag over an inset of the warship *Démocratie*. Dozens of this type of real photo postcards targeting the French naval forces and printed in Italy were issued in Malta during WW1. Some are signed by the publisher Cortis & Co, but most have no publisher’s imprint. I have good reason to believe they were produced by Umberto Adinolfi (b. 1870) a prolific Italian photographer and publisher from Senglea who in 1934 became a British subject in Malta by naturalization.<sup>4</sup>

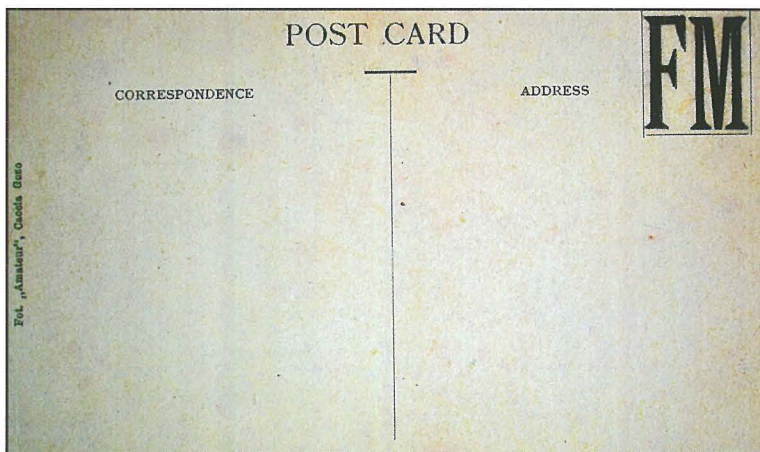


Fig. 4

The back of a Gozo postcard by Fot. ‘Amateur’ Casal Caccia (Mikiel Farrugia *l-Badiku*), pre-printed for use by the French naval personnel in Malta with the FM initials (for *Franchise Militaire*) in the top right-hand stamp corner. This indicated that the card would not require a stamp if used by seamen on active service.

<sup>4</sup> Giovanni Bonello, “More notes for a history of Photography in Malta” in *The Sunday Times of Malta*, August 2, 2015.

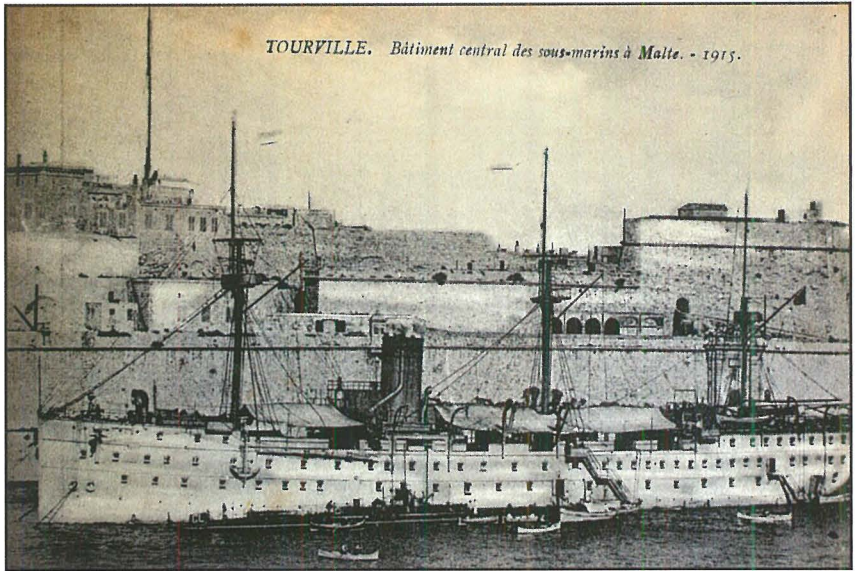


Fig. 5

The French troopship *Tourville* berthed in Grand Harbour during the war. This ship served a double purpose in Malta – as a submarine depot ship (one is seen berthed alongside) and as the central post-office for the French naval forces stationed in Malta. Their mail generally arrived in and left from the *Tourville*.

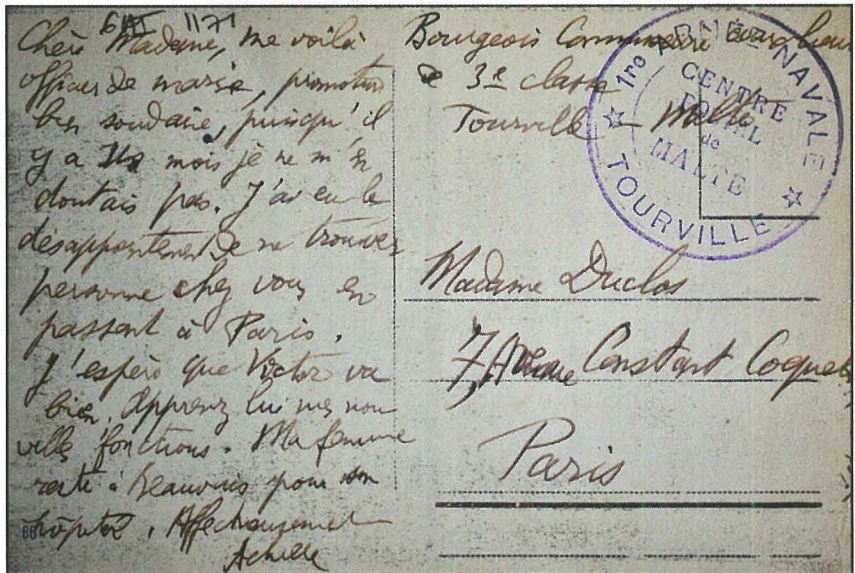


Fig. 6

A Malta postcard that passed through the *Tourville*. The large circular hand-stamp has the inscription \* 1re ARMEE NAVALE \* TOURVILLE \* round the rim and CENTRE / POSTAL / de / MALTE in straight lines in the centre.



Fig. 7

A pre-printed official postcard for use by the French armed forces, sent from Malta on May 23 1916 and handstamped POSTES NAVALES and MALTE.



Fig. 8

A Malta postcard stamped with a GV farthing brown stamp cancelled by the French circular handstamp in use by the French fleet in Malta \* MARINE FRANCAISE \* SERVICE A LA MER \* enclosing a large fouled anchor. Many sub-types of this handstamp exist used in Malta.



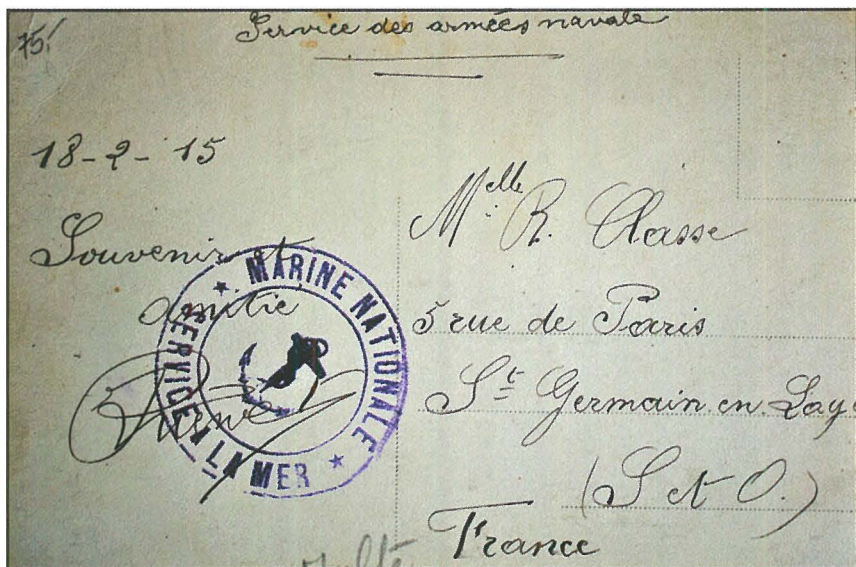


Fig. 9

A Malta postcard sent on February 2, 1915 from Malta to France stamped with the other standard circular handstamp \* MARINE NATIONALE \* SERVICE A LA MER \* enclosing a smaller fouled anchor. Several sub-types of this handstamp are found used in Malta.

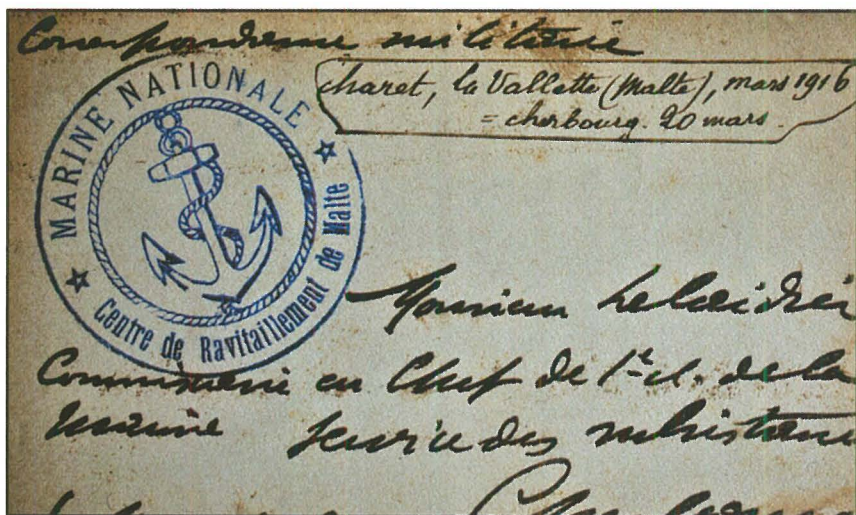


Fig 10

Visiting card envelope sent from Malta to Cherbourg in March 1916. It bears the circular handstamp \* MARINE NATIONALE \* Centre de Ravitaillement de Malte \* round a large fouled anchor.



Fig. 11  
 Malta postcard stamped by a large circular \* CORPS EXPEDITIONNAIRE D'ORIENT \*  
 CONVOIS AUTOMOBILES 128 T.M. \* surrounding a seated figure of Republican liberty.

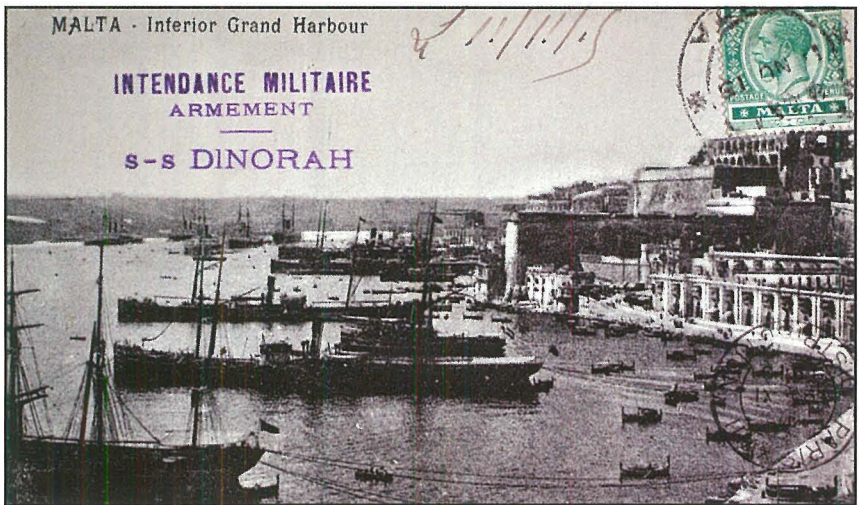


Fig. 12  
 Malta postcard dated November 11, 1915, addressed to Paris, bearing on front and back a straight-  
 line handstamp on three lines: INTENDANCE MILITAIRE / ARMEMENT / s - s DINORAH.  
 This cargo ship was sunk by German U Boat SM UC - 63 on September 25, 1917 in the Atlantic.

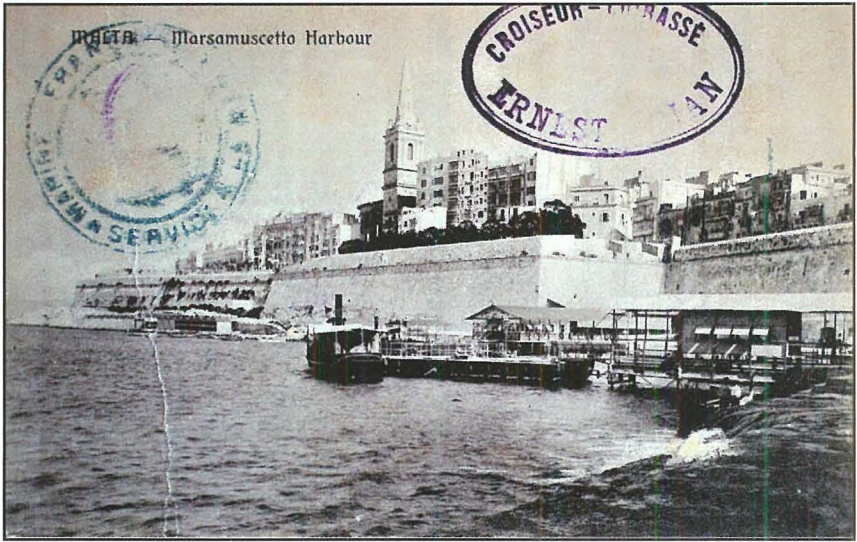


Fig. 13  
 Named warship. Malta postcard with oval handstamp CROISEUR – CUIRASSE’ – ERNEST RENAN dated December 14, 1914.

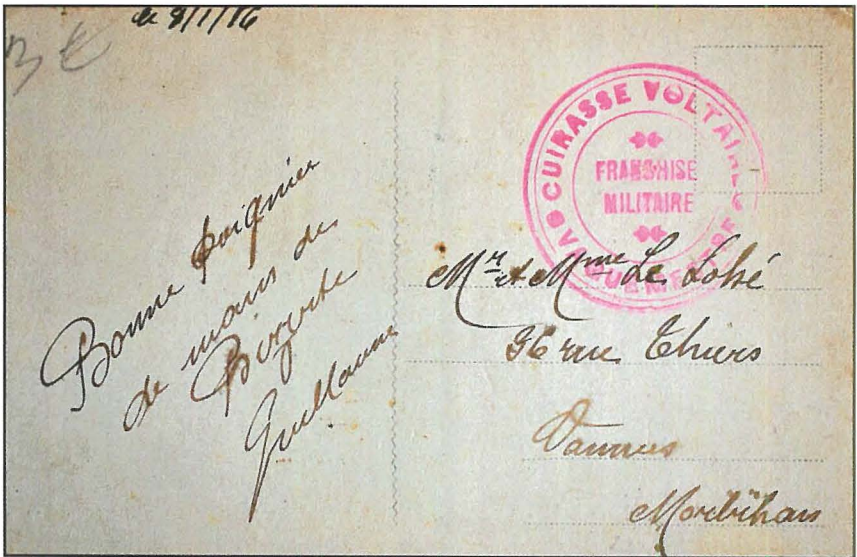


Fig. 14  
 Named warship. Malta postcard dated January 8, 1916, with circular handstamp in red, \* CUIRASSE VOLTAIRE \* VAGUEMESTRE \* (postal agent) round the rim and horizontal FRANCHISE MILITAIRE at the centre.



Fig. 15  
 Named warship. Malta postcard dated September 14, 1914, stamped in straight line with the name of the cruiser \* JURIEN de la GRAVIERE \* commissioned in 1903.



Fig. 16.  
 Named warship. Malta postcard published by John Critien dated October 7 (no year) stamped front and back with an oval canceller in red \* AVISO AUXILIARE \* NORD CAPER \*.

MALTA — National Costume.

# POSTAL DIARY

## 07<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 – 12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019

Compiled by  
John V. De Battista

### 07<sup>th</sup> January

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at ‘Allstat Stationery’, situated at 1, Triq il-Lampara, Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq NXR 5134, will be closed between Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January and Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January.

During this period, the public was advised that it may alternatively make use of the postal services provided from Naxxar Post Office situated at the Civic Centre, Vjal il-21 ta’ Settembru, Naxxar NXR 1018.

### 09<sup>th</sup> January

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at 51, Triq Gorg Borg Olivier, Mellieħa, MLĦ 1024 will be closed till the 17<sup>th</sup> April.

During this period, the public was advised that as an alternative it could make use of the postal services provided from Mellieħa Post Office situated at 100, Triq il-Mithna l-Ġdida, Mellieħa MLĦ 1107.

### 17<sup>th</sup> January

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at ‘D Spiral’ Stationery, situated at Triq il-Vitorja, Birkirkara BKR 2691, will be closed on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January.

As an alternative, on this day the public could make use of the postal services provided from the nearest post office, namely the Birkirkara Post Office situated at 58, Triq il-Wied, Birkirkara BKR 9013.

In a separate media communication, it also informed the public that on the 18<sup>th</sup> January, MaltaPost will be launching the 2018 Year Pack which includes all stamp sets, in mint condition, issued during that year, namely:

Traditional Costumes, Maritime Series - ‘Vessels of the order’, Europa 2018 - ‘Bridges’, Valletta 2018 - ‘European Capital of Culture’, 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™, Euromed 2018 - ‘Houses in the Mediterranean’, 75th Anniversary Allied Invasion of Sicily ‘Operation Husky’, Sepac Series - ‘Spectacular Views’, Maltese Festa Series II, 50th Anniversary of the Death of Padre Pio, Dogs, Christmas 2018, Malta - Kyrgyzstan - Joint Stamp Issue.

The Year Pack includes information with regards to the technical details related to all 2018 stamp issues.

In the third media communication issued on this day, MaltaPost announced that it has been awarded the prestigious ‘Premju Soċjetà Ġusta’ as the Company which operates in the most inclusive manner in respect of its Tanseana Project. The ‘Premju Soċjetà Ġusta’ is organised by the Parliamentary Secretariat for persons with disability and active ageing. This award was initially created as a celebration of the work, commitment and dedication being taken by the people involved in the disability sector; but this year has introduced a prize for the most inclusive company. This award recognises employers that offer in-work opportunities to persons with disability and implement practices that go beyond what is required of them by law.

Most of the staff members engaged by MaltaPost on this project are persons with various forms of disability who reside in Gozo. With the support of JobsPlus and the Lino Spiteri Foundation these employees carry out work related to Document Management services.

MaltaPost has undertaken this project in the spirit of promoting inclusivity understanding, supporting, enhancing and focusing primarily on the abilities of disabled persons. The core principle that guides these Awards is to have a society whereby persons with a disability participate actively in the community.

MaltaPost pointed out that it is very proud to have been the first company to have won this prestigious award and that it looks forward to strengthening its ‘Tanseana Project’ to further help persons with disability.

## **24<sup>th</sup> January**

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at ‘Step in’, Misrah ir-Rebħa, il-Birgu BRG 1300, will be closed between Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January and Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February. During this period, the public was advised that it may wish to alternatively make use of the postal services provided from Bormla Post Office at Block No 14, Flat No. 12, Fuq San Pawl, Bormla BML 1910.

## **07<sup>th</sup> February**

MaltaPost informed the general public that, by agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February the last collection of mail from all letterboxes will be carried out at 1:00 p.m. and the Parcel Office at the MaltaPost Head Office in Marsa will close at 4:00 p.m.



## 07<sup>th</sup> February

For the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary from the birth of the Capuchin Brother Baskal Farrugia, MaltaPost notified the public that a commemorative hand stamp will be issued on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February for use at the Victoria Post Office.

The single severed-ring hand stamp is inscribed “150 SENA MIT-TWELID TAL-QADDEJ T’ALLA FRA BASKAL - KAPUĊĊIN” along the outside bordering the ring, and “\* MALTAPOST – VICTORIA, GOZO - MALTA \*” bordering the ring on the inner side. At the centre of the hand stamp is an outline drawing of Fra Baskal beneath which was placed the issue date in a straight line “09-02-19”.

## 15<sup>th</sup> February

MaltaPost informed the public that the letterbox situated at Triq Taltas, Żejtun, is temporary closed with immediate effect until further notice.

It also informed the public that alternatively it may wish to use letterbox number LB136 situated in Triq Santu Wistin.

In another media communication, MaltaPost informed the public that the letterbox situated at Triq Ġorg Borġ Olivier in Mellieħa, will be temporary closed as from Friday 15<sup>th</sup> February until further notice.

As an alternative, the public was directed to make use of letterbox number LB319 situated in the same street if it so wishes.

## 19<sup>th</sup> February

Today MaltaPost informed that on the 21<sup>st</sup> February, it will be issuing a set consisting of two stamps, featuring a ceremonial boat and a gondola, dating back to the Order of Saint John. The set is the seventh from the annual ‘Maritime Malta’ series. The €0.26 stamp depicts a model known as the ‘Felucca Dorada’ or the gilded felucca, while the €5.00 stamp depicts a model of the gondola of Grand Master Adrien de Wignacourt. These models are currently on display at the Malta Maritime Museum. The stamps each measure 44mm x 31mm, with a perforation of 14.0 x 13.9 (comb.) bearing the Maltese Cross watermark. The sheets measure 185mm x 115mm and each sheet includes ten stamps. Printex Limited produced the stamp set through the offset process and the issue consists of 700,000 of the €0.26 stamp and 70,000 of the €5.00 stamp.



MaltaPost prepared an occasion hand stamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No.1/2019). The single severed-ring hand stamp is inscribed

“MARITIME MALTA SERIES VII - ‘VESSELS OF THE ORDER’” along the outside bordering the ring and “\* MALTAPOST ----- - MALTA \*” on the lower inner side of the ring. The words “JUM IL-HRUĠ/21-02-19” in straight lines are to be found below an outline image depicting the gondola shown on the €5.00 value positioned at the top centre of the hand stamp. MaltaPost’s Philatelic Bureau featured the issue in Stamp Bulletin numbered as No. 382.

The second media communication released today informed the public that the letterbox situated in ‘Triq l-Indipendenza’ in Xewkija, Gozo was temporary removed with immediate effect until further notice.

The public was advised that if it so wishes it could make use of the nearest letterbox number LB510 situated in ‘Triq il-Kbira’, Xewkija as an alternative.

## **28<sup>th</sup> February**

To increase further the accessibility of postal services for the general public, MaltaPost today announced that it will be having a new Sub Post Office in Iklin. Clients using the services of this Sub Post Office can avail themselves of numerous postal services such as local and international ordinary and registered mail, sale of postage stamps, collection of packets as well as bill payments and money orders.

The new Sub Post Office will be situated at ‘Tronic Peach’, Triq iċ-Ċitru, Iklin IKL 1081. Postal services will be available at this new Sub Post Office as from Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February and collection of items from this Sub Post Office will start as from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March.

This new Sub Post Office’s opening hours will be as follows:

Monday to Friday from 9.30 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.; Saturday from 9.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

## **01<sup>st</sup> March**

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at ‘D Spiral’ Stationery, situated at Triq il-Vitorja, Birkirkara BKR 2691, will be closed on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

On this day, the public was advised that it may use the postal services provided from Birkirkara Post Office situated at 58, Triq il-Wied, Birkirkara BKR 9013 as a nearest alternative.

## **04<sup>th</sup> March**

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Offices at ‘Forex Stationery’, 16, Misraħ tas-Suq, Tarxien TXN 1951 will be closed on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March.



On this day, Tarxien residents could make use of the postal services provided from the nearest post office, namely Paola Post Office located in the Civic Centre, Pjazza De Paul, Paola, PLA 1266.

## 05<sup>th</sup> March

It was announced that for the occasion of the Centenary from the issue of the "10/- St Paul" Malta Stamp, MaltaPost will issue a commemorative hand stamp for use on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March at the Victoria Post Office.

The single severed-ring hand stamp is inscribed "CENTENARY – "10/- ST PAUL" – MALTA STAMP" along the outside bordering the ring, and "\* MALTAPOST – VICTORIA, GOZO - MALTA \*" bordering the ring on the inner side. At the centre of the hand stamp is an outline drawing of the theme comprising the date 1919-2019 and Gozo Philatelic Society, beneath which was placed the issue date in a straight line "06-03-19".



It was also announced that during the Company's Annual Staff meeting, a number of awards were presented to MaltaPost staff members, in recognition for their hard work and outstanding performance in 2018.

MaltaPost's Chairman, Joseph Said, also presented the 2018 financial and quality results and highlighted the importance of the Company's economic and social role. He stated that MaltaPost is committed to remain the trusted postal and logistics provider.

The Chairman also emphasized the commitment towards the Company's customers in offering an excellent service. He mentioned that the company is attracting new clients whilst it remains focused in facilitating the delivery of a significant increase in packages to meet high customer service expectations. MaltaPost's Chief Executive Officer Joseph Gafa' thanked all the Company's staff for their hard work throughout 2018.

Awards were presented by both the Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer of the Company.

The awards presented were as follows:

- Employee of the year award 2018 – Stefano Ellul
- Best Employee - Delivery Section – Rachel Magro, Noel Borg
- Best Employee - Central Mail Room – Claire Abela
- Best Employee - Courier and Parcel Office – Stephen Zammit
- Best Employee - Retail Section – Dorianne Azzopardi
- Best Employee - Administration – Neil Busutt:l

Best Employee - Unaddressed Mail Section – Omar Sharmarke Abdullahi  
Best Employee - Document Management Section – Miriam Hili  
Best Employee - Parcel Post Office – Oliver Schembri  
Best Employee - Customer Experience – George Vella  
Best Operations Department – San Ġwann Delivery Centre led by Ian Borg  
Best Post Office - Swieqi Post Office led by Claire Dalli  
Corporate Social Responsibility Award – San Ġwann Delivery Centre led by Ian Borg  
Best User of Smart Mobility Electric Vehicle – Gabriella Valna  
During the Annual Staff Meeting two retired employees, namely Carmen Fenech and Emanuel Rapa, were also honoured for their loyalty and commitment towards the organization during their long years of service.

### **07<sup>th</sup> March**

MaltaPost today informed the public of the new opening times of the Parcel Office at Marsa Head Office. This is now open from Monday to Friday between 8.00am to 7.00pm (instead of 8.00am to 8.00pm); Saturday: 8.00am to 6.30pm (unchanged).

It also advised its clients that they may choose to alternatively collect their parcels 24/7 from any of MaltaPost's Easipik Parcel Lockers situated in various localities in Malta and Gozo.

### **12<sup>th</sup> March**

MaltaPost informed the public that the letterbox situated at Triq Bir Miftuh, Gudja, is temporarily closed.

The public was invited that as an alternative it could make use of the nearest letterbox located in Triq il-Kbira, Gudja.

In another media communication, MaltaPost also announced that it had installed a postbox on board the M. V. Saint John Paul II catamaran. Mail posted in this postbox will be marked "PAQUEBOT" and postage stamps cancelled accordingly. It was further stated that mail posted during voyages to or from Malta will be collected and processed upon arrival at Malta. Furthermore it was noted that service of this letterbox had commenced on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019.



**Security printers since 1971,**  
producing stamps for Maltapost and the  
Vatican Philatelic Bureau, amongst others.



This Year Pack contains all the stamps sets in mint condition that were issued in 2019.

Issues included:

- Maritime Malta Series VII 'Vessels of the Order' • 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Council of Europe • Europa - 'National Birds' • 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Sette Giugno Events - 1919 - 2019 • Malta At War - 'The Map Plotters' • Euromed Postal 'Traditional Costumes' • 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Man On The Moon • SEPAC Series 'Old Residential Houses'
- Maltese Festa Series III • 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the EMS Cooperative • The Stage Commandos & Popular Entertainers • Birth of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi - 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary • Malta - Romania Architecture, Palaces • Apiculture in Malta • Christmas



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