

# Postal Diary

23 November 2006 – 31 March 2007

By

Joseph Fenech

## 29 November 2006

Triangle Management Services Ltd., an independent research company to the global mail sector, announced the launch of a Postal Benchmarking Club. This Club was launched during the Universal Postal Union (UPU) Strategy Conference held in Dubai, UAE, between the 14 and 16 November 2006, where Maltapost was represented by its Chief Executive Officer, Mr Joseph Gafa'. The inaugural group of small and medium-sized Post Offices in this Club, including Maltapost, decided that the initial aims and objectives of the Club should be modest and that it was important to obtain progress "in starting to share best practice across the postal world". It was envisaged that this Postal Benchmarking Club would formally commence its work in 2007.

## 1 December

An exhibition of original designs used for stamp issues with archaeological and Christmas themes, was held between 1 December 2006 and 14 January 2007 at the 'Lobby', National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta. The exhibition, called "Stars and Spirals: Christmas and Archaeology Stamp Designs", was organised by Heritage Malta and Maltapost plc.

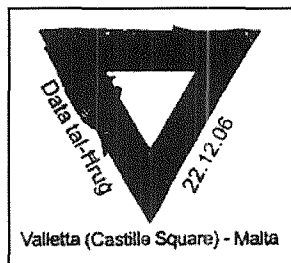
## 15 December

Through Notice 1060 appearing in Government Gazette No 18,009 of 15 December, it was announced that for the purpose of sub-article (3) of article 14 of the Postal Services Act (Cap. 254), the Malta Communications Authority notified that it had received an application by Premiere Post Limited for the issue of a licence to provide postal services which are not reserved but which fall within the scope of the universal services. The applicant was requesting authorisation to provide such services in all the localities within the Maltese Islands. Any person wishing to make representations to the Authority in relation to the said application could do so by not later than 2 January 2007.

## 22 December

A Commemorative Miniature Sheet was issued by Maltapost to commemorate the Bob Geldof Malta concert in aid of YMCA Homeless. Sir Bob Geldof was invited to Malta to take part in the Live YMCA concert, on the occasion of the

30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the YMCA work in Malta. The stamp used in this sheet was originally designed by Roxana Caruana, and had formed part of the Children's Designs set issued in the year 2000. The Commemorative Sheet, which retailed at Lm1.50, was designed by Jean Pierre Mizzi, and was offset printed by Printex Ltd. on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The sheet was 121mm x 86mm in size, while the stamp



was 33mm x 27mm, with a perforation of 14 x 13.75 (comb). On this occasion, a special cover (Commemorative Cover 3) was also issued by Maltapost. Maltapost issued a special commemorative (triangular) handstamp to cancel the miniature sheet on the first day of issue. The handstamp was inscribed “Data tal-Hruġ 22.12.06/----- - Malta”.

## 26 December

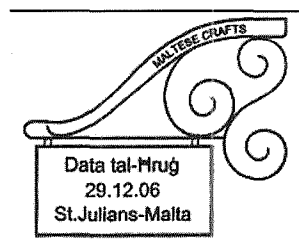
By agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, no mail delivery was carried out, and the Maltapost retail outlets did not open for business, on Tuesday, 26 December. Normal service was resumed on Wednesday, 27 December.

## 26 December

The sub-post office at Just Jase, 19 Islet Promenade, Bugibba, closed for business due to a major refurbishment project, from Tuesday, 26 December until further notice.

## 29 December

A set of five stamps depicting five different examples of traditional Maltese crafts, was issued on 29 December. The stamps, which were designed by Richard J. Caruana and offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper, are the first to carry a dual face value, as the Euro value



is included (as part of the process for the gradual introduction of the Euro in Malta). The stamps, which are 44.0 mm x 31.0 mm in size, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14 (comb), are available in sheets of ten. The stamps have face values of 8¢/Euro 0.19 (Wrought Iron Craft), 16¢/Euro 0.37 (Glass-Making), 22¢/Euro 0.51 (Filigree Work), 37¢/Euro 0.86 (Maltese Pottery) and 60¢/Euro 1.40 (Maltese Reed Basketry). Maltapost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue. The handstamp was inscribed “Maltese Crafts/ Data tal-Hruġ/29.12.06/-----/Malta”. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No. 248.

## 2 January 2007

By agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, no mail delivery was carried out, and the Maltapost retail outlets did not open for business, on Tuesday, 2 January. Normal service was resumed on Wednesday, 3 January.

## 21 January

Two Occasion Cards and a Commemorative Cover were issued by Maltapost on Sunday, 21 January, to commemorate the inauguration of Fr Paul Cremona as Archbishop of Malta, and Gozo Bishop Mario Grech, whose inauguration took place the previous year. The two Occasion Cards, both marked Occasion Card No. 14, depict Archbishop Paul Cremona and Bishop Mario Grech respectively. The imprinted stamp on these Cards is of 51¢ (Euro 1.19) value, and had originally been designed by the late Chevalier Emvin Cremona (a former relative of Archbishop Cremona). This stamp had been issued on 9 February 1960, to commemorate the XIX centenary of St. Paul's Shipwreck, and depicts the Episcopal Consecration of Malta's first bishop, St. Publius. The Commemorative Cover (Commemorative Cover 1) carries two personalised stamps, with the images of Archbishop Cremona and Bishop Grech. The Cover also shows the Maltese Islands, the respective crests of both bishops and the crozier. A special commemorative handstamp inscribed "L-Isqfijiet tal-Gżejjer Maltin/Philatelic Bureau – Malta/21-26.01.07" was prepared by Maltapost for use on both the Occasion Cards as well as the Commemorative Cover.



## 26 January

The Annual Year Pack covering all stamp issues for 2006, was issued by Maltapost plc on Friday, 26 January. This year's Year Pack, the 19<sup>th</sup> in the series, containing the mint stamps of all the thirteen sets issued in 2006, is presented in a folder, with a photograph of the Sleeping Lady from the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum. The Year Pack is offered for sale at Lm22.75.

## 31 January

The postal service returned back to normal at 10.00 am of 31 January following the withdrawal of the strike action which had been ordered the previous day by the Union Haddiema Magħqudin.

## 12 February

In August 2006, Maltapost had advised that it had introduced a new parcel labelling

system, eliminating the need to affix stamps to parcels, for airmail parcels to foreign destinations. Further to this, with effect from Monday, 12 February 2007, postage stamps were no longer accepted for the posting of parcels. In fact, from this date onwards, all parcels are accepted by Maltapost only through the Parcel Labelling System.

#### **14 February**

Maltapost announced the official formation of the SEPAC group of Post Offices (Small European Postal Administrations



Cooperation). Currently there are twelve member Post Offices in the SEPAC group, including Aland Post, Faroes Post, Gibraltar Philatelic Bureau, Post Greenland, Guernsey Post Ltd, Iceland Post, Isle of Man Post, Jersey Post Ltd, Liechtenstein Post Corp., Maltapost plc, Monaco Post and San Marino Post. The purpose of the SEPAC stamps is to highlight to the world-wide philatelic industry and to stamp collectors alike, the joint cooperation of the SEPAC member Post Offices/Postal Administrations in connection with the promotion of philately and to make the public aware of the history, nature, scenery and culture of the SEPAC member Post Offices/Postal Administrations' European countries. The SEPAC group of Post Offices will issue their first joint stamp issue in the new SEPAC collection on 1 October 2007. The theme chosen for the first joint stamp issue is 'scenery'. Each member Post Office may interpret this theme in its own preferred manner, and eleven of the twelve Post Offices will take part in the first joint issue. San Marino Post is not taking part in 2007. The SEPAC group has its own official SEPAC logo, which will be reproduced for the first time on one stamp only within each Post Office's set of 'scenery' stamps in 2007. The SEPAC stamp within each set will be that bearing the first weight step postage rate to European destinations. A special SEPAC Joint Stamp Issue folder will also be issued on 1 October 2007. Entitled "Beautiful Corners of Europe", this folder will contain one SEPAC logo stamp from each of the eleven participating Post Offices. This folder will be available for sale from all eleven Philatelic Bureaux of the participating SEPAC Post Offices. Further SEPAC joint stamp issues are scheduled to be issued in 2009 and 2011 when San Marino Post and any additional new SEPAC member Post Offices may participate. The criteria for SEPAC membership include that the Post Office/Postal Administration must: (a) be independent, and be located within Europe, and (b) have a small home market with more than 50% of its philatelic customers living outside its own territory. An official launch of the SEPAC joint stamp issue and the "Beautiful Corners of Europe" folder will take place on 3

May 2007 during the Essen stamp exhibition. During a recent SEPAC meeting, Maltapost representative Mr George Galea was elected vice-chairman of the group. Luxembourg also associated itself with the group at the end of the meeting, and this will therefore increase the number of members in the group to thirteen.

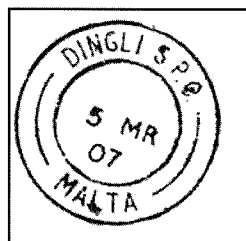
### 28 February

A set of four stamps featuring Maltese prehistoric sculptures was issued by Maltapost on 28 February. The stamps were designed by Josian Bonello using images photographed by Daniel Cilia, and were offset printed by Printex Ltd. on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps come in a size of 44.0 mm x 31.0 mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14 (comb). The stamps carry both decimal and Euro denominations, these being 15c/Euro 0.35 (showing the head part of a full figure that was discovered by Sir Themistocles Zammit during his excavations of the Tarxien Temples), 29c/Euro 0.68 (depicting a series of silhouettes on soft globigerina limestone from Tarxien, showing animals that were probably domesticated), 60c/Euro 1.40 (showing a series of spirals on a low-relief sculpture) and Lm1.50/Euro 3.49 (depicting a miniature clay statuette - naked, erect female figure – discovered during the excavation of Haġar Qim in 1839). A special commemorative handstamp inscribed “-----  
-- - MALTA/JUM IL-HRUĠ 28.02.07” was prepared by Maltapost to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No. 250.



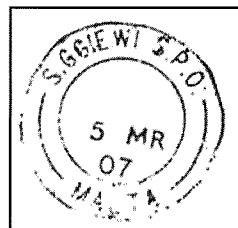
### 5 March

A sub-post office was opened at Welcome Bazaar, 6 Misrah Frenç Abela, Dingli DGL 1081, on Monday, 5 March, to provide all postal services as well as bill payment services. A metal hand date-stamp inscribed with the words ‘DINGLI S.P.O. – MALTA’ started to be used at this sub-post office.



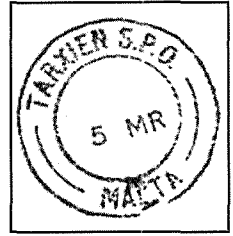
### 5 March

A sub-post office was opened at Louis Stationery, 49 Pjazza San Nikola, Siġġiewi SĠW 1070, on Monday, 5 March, to provide all postal services as well as bill payment services. A metal hand date-stamp inscribed with the words ‘SIĠĠIEWI S.P.O. – MALTA’ started to be used at this sub-post office.



## 5 March

A sub-post office was opened at Forex Stationery, 17 Misrah Tas-Suq, Tarxien TXN 1951, on Monday, 5 March, to provide all postal services as well as bill payment services. A metal hand date-stamp inscribed with the words 'TARXIEN S.P.O. – MALTA' started to be used at this sub-post office. It is interesting to note that, at least on the first day, this date-stamp showed the day and month (5 MR), but had the year (07) missing.



## 7 March

A special hand postmark – Ċintinarju tas-Socjetà M.U.S.E.U.M. – was used at the Maltapost retail outlet, Old Railway Avenue, Hamrun on Wednesday, 7 March, between 7.30 am and 1.45 pm. On this occasion, the M.U.S.E.U.M. Society issued two different commemorative cards, each with a different special personalised stamp. One personalised stamp was used in conjunction with the Christmas 2005 7c stamp, while the other personalised stamp was used with the Christmas 2005 16c stamp (in the latter case, the commemorative cards were numbered – limited up to 1000).



## 20 March

Through Notice 254 appearing in Government Gazette No 18,053 of 20 March, it was announced that for the purpose of sub-article (5) of article 9 of the Postal Services Act (Cap. 254), the Malta Communications Authority notified that on 13 March 2007, a licence was granted to Premiere Post Limited (C 39835) to provide postal services which are not reserved but which fall within the scope of the universal services. The licence has been issued since the granting of this licence to the licensee offers users of postal services in Malta more options in terms of quality and price.

## 25 March

A special hand postmark, inscribed "TOGETHER SINCE 1957/ FLIMKIEN MILL-1957/NADUR – GOZO – MALTA – 25.3.2007", was used at the Nadur Local Council, North Street, Nadur, Gozo, on Sunday, 25 March between 8.00 am and 12.00 noon.



## 29 March

The second thematic album entitled “Maltese Coastline” was issued by Maltapost on 29 March. This album, offered for sale at Lm4.00, takes a look at the Maltese coastline through a number of stamp sets issued since the year 2000, and including the Frama labels issued in 2002. The Maltese Coastline album, which was designed by 26<sup>th</sup> Frame, includes eight issues with cancelled stamps, together with a number of 16-stamp sheetlets, covering diverse topics, as Seahorses, Seashells, Castles and Towers, Lighthouses, Sailing and Military Architecture. Besides a general essay, the text also includes full annotations of all the stamps in the album.

## 30 March

Up to noon of Friday, 30 March, Maltapost plc received applications for the post of Sub-Postmaster at the localities of Attard, Birgu, Birkirkara, Fgura, Floriana, Gharghur, Gudja, Iklin, Isla, Kirkop, Lija, Marsa, Mdina, Mtarfa, Pembroke, Pietà, Safi, Sliema, Sta. Venera, Swieqi and Xghajra, in Malta, and in Fontana, Ghasri, Kerċem, Munxar, Qala, San Lawrenz, Sannat, Xewkija and Żebbuġ, in Gozo.

# Maltex 2007

will this year take place on the

**28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>**

**September 2007**

**Start preparing from now.**