

# SURPRISE BIRTHDAY DINNER FOR THE PRESIDENT

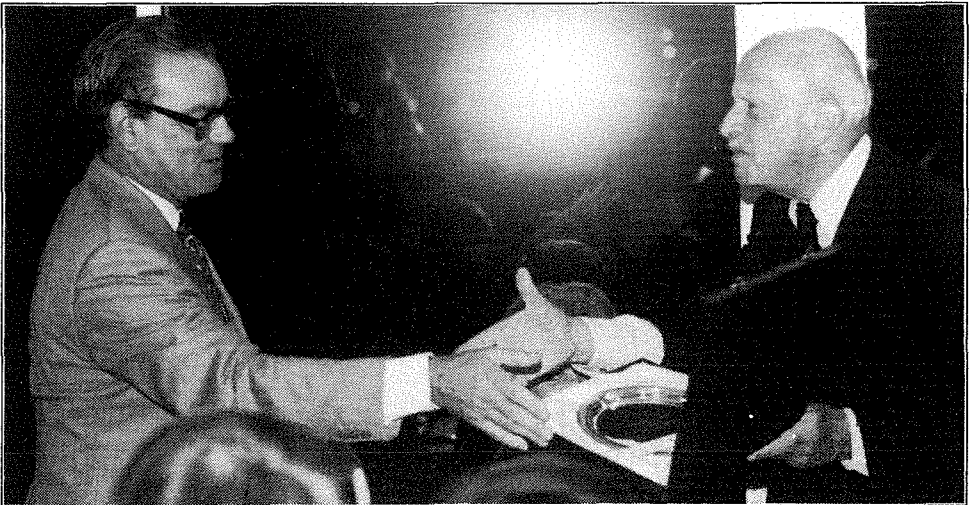
by Joe Mizzi

Surely, Saturday 7th November 1992 will always be a fondly remembered day by Dr John H. Mercieca, President of the Philatelic Society of Malta and Past President and Honorary Life President of the Dental Association of Malta, for on this day both Societies jointly organised a Surprise Dinner at the Pisces Restaurant at Marsaxlokk to celebrate his 80th birthday which fell exactly on that day.

The dinner, well patronised by members of both associations, was held in a most happy and friendly atmosphere. As Dr Mercieca, with his family, walked in, a vociferous chorus of "Happy Birthday to You" cheerfully resounded from the four corners of the hall. Dr Mercieca with raised arms and enthusiastically and happily waving to all participants, gratefully acknowledged their very hearty welcome.

Dinner over, Dr Roger Vella, President of the Dental Association of Malta, invited those present to raise their glasses and drink to Dr Mercieca's health. He thanked the 'guest of honour' for his many valid contributions to the stability and advancement of the dental profession in Malta, throughout the past 55 years. He wished him a happy birthday and yet more of them in the years ahead. Dr Vella then presented Dr Mercieca with a lovely silver frame in his name and on behalf of the Dental Association of Malta.

Dr Vella was followed by Dr Alfred Bonnici, vice-president of the Malta Philatelic Society, who in presenting Dr Mercieca with an appropriately engraved silver tray, spoke about the manifold activities put in by Dr Mercieca over a span





of many long years. He stressed that were it not for his strong leadership, dedication and untiring efforts, both the Dental Association of Malta, which in 14 months time will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its foundation and whose President he had been for 22 successive years, as also the Malta Philatelic Society, which only last year celebrated its Silver Jubilee under his 21-years Presidency, would have long ago been extinct and forgotten.

Dr Mercieca thanked both speakers for their kind words and for the surprise dinner they had organised on the occasion of his birthday. He promised to continue to contribute with the same zest as in the past to the welfare and progress of both associations, which were both so much to his heart. He wished them both a bright future and augured their continued growth. He thanked the organisers for bringing together under one roof both associations, thus creating a sort of twinning between them. Dr Mercieca then cut a huge birthday cake and afterwards circulated round the tables shaking hands and chatting with all who attended.

The members of Dr Mercieca's family – his son Dr Arthur Mercieca and his wife Ruby as well as his son John and his fiancée Miss Cinzia Pitre – were the guests of both associations.

Among those present were: Mr Paul Mercieca and Mr Michael Mercieca, both brothers of Dr John Mercieca, with their wives, Dr and Mrs Roger Vella, Dr Alfred Bonnici, Professor and Mrs L Cutajar, Dr and Mrs Albert Ganado, Professor and Mrs J Portelli, Mr Alfred Gera de Petri and his wife the Noble Baroness A Gera de Petri Testaferatta Bonnici, Mr and Mrs C Diamantino, Dr and Mrs K Vella Bardon, Dr and Mrs Malcolm Mallia, Dr and Mrs Charles Galea, Dr and Mrs S Camilleri, Dr Anthony Charles, Dr Mark Padovani and fiancée, Dr Alfred Magri Demajo, Dr Alex Cassar, Dr and Mrs W Debono, Dr and Mrs V Gauci, Mr and Mrs Anthony Fenech, Fr A Galea SJ, Mr and Mrs J Vella, Chev P Catania, Mr J Caruana Grech and Mr and Mrs Joseph Farrugia.