

THE PSM MAGAZINE

THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY

OF MALTA



THE PSM MAGAZINE

Bronze-Gilt Medal at VIIth Malta Philatelic Exhibition — 1977

Bronze Medals at PRAGA' 78; PHILASERDICA '79

Editor: Nick A. Cutajar Ass. Editor: Joseph Farrugia

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THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As a result of Act XXII, 1978, an extraordinary General Meeting was held by the Society on November 4th, 1978 aimed at renaming the Society. (The Act in question controls the use of the name of "Malta", "Nation" and derivatives. The Act came into force as from November 1st, 1978). The Meeting decided on the name for the Society and henceforth it will be known as "The Philatelic Society". This will of course affect the magazine and explains the changes.

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Mr. J. Farrugia, Ass. Ed., P.S.M. — 34 Nursing Sisters' St., St. Julians.

FOREWORD

One hundred years ago, two gentlemen who made several contributions to the development of the postal service and therefore closely connected with philately, departed from this world. One had the fortune to obtain his authorities understanding, the other had the misfortune to be regarded as "overzealous" by his superiors. This year marks the Centenary of Sir Rowland Hill, considered and regarded as the father of the stamp. The occasion presents the opportunity to savour the avalanche of stamps in all their beauty and extravagance, while at the same time reflect on the developments since 1840 in the stamp world.

However life has a way of neglecting important contributions and one man whose name has remained hidden away from public eyes for many years is Laurenz Koschier. Austria has wisely decided to amend matters and portray him on a stamp, appropriately issued within the "Europa" series which this year were dedicated to the History of the Posts and Telecommunications.

Developments in stampdom are not solely occasions of the past — we still encounter new names in the catalogue and changes in the political situations that invariably affect stamp issues. One such important development in recent months is the stamp of officiality given by the Italian Postal Administration to the issues of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta through a postal agreement, which although not yet operative, will give postal validity to the stamps of the S.M.O.M. The Order is about to enter a philatelic career not without some opposition but hopefully it will not be long before the Order's issues are given official status in major catalogues.

In recent years the National Philatelic Exhibition has been relegated to a bi-annual event and 1979 is on schedule for the VIIIth Edition. Judging from past experience, it is evident that there is a lack of serious planning and the whole organization goes in full operation only a few weeks before the exhibition is actually held, with postal officials, already burdened with their duties, trying to make the best out of it, and it is to their credit that the local exhibitions attain some form of success.

So far, and we are writing early June, no word has been received yet confirming the holding of this year's exhibition. We hope that enough publicity will be mounted well in advance so that we assure ourselves of foreign participation by Postal Administrations. And while on this key, it would be wise for whoever decides the rules of the exhibition to limit participation in the competitive section to local participants only, for obvious reasons. There is an urgent need to involve more philatelists in the organization to share the burden and responsibility, knowledgeable persons who can offer their expertise and know-how. Proper guidelines should be established regarding the judging of the exhibits, which must be judged solely on their own merits, while philatelic literature should be appraised properly.

SOCIETY TALK

Malta Tapestries Top the Poll

Two stamps from the second series depicting Flemish Tapestries released by the Malta Post Office in 1978 were voted into the two top places in the International "VOTE A STAMP" Referendum organized by the Philatelic Society. Once again for the second year running, stamps with a religious motif were considered as the most beautiful Malta stamps, even though these did not feature original designs.

The 25c values of the Flemish Tapestries II set, issued on 26.1.78 and reproducing "The Resurrection" (woven after a painting by P.P. Rubens) was chosen by collectors worldwide as the most beautiful Malta stamp for 1978. The stamp obtained 21% of the total number of valid votes.

The 7c stamp of the same issue, reproducing "The Last Supper" (after Poussin) was voted into second place with 12.2% + of the votes. The artwork for both stamps was prepared by Chev. Emvin Cremona, who also designed the 20c stamp of the first issue of the Flemish Tapestries and which was chosen as the most beautiful stamp for 1977 in last year's referendum.

Voters reserved the third place for the 17c stamp of the "Albrecht Durer" issue of 7/III/78, reproducing "Mary with the Long-tailed Monkey", the artwork of which was prepared by local artist Antoine Camilleri.

The IVth Edition of the "Vote A Stamp" referendum 1979 produced unprecedented participation with overseas entries as well as local ones showing substantial increases. Votes were received mostly from Europe, the United States and Canada, but entries were also received from Australia, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, India, Pakistan, South Africa and Thailand.

The full results of the referendum were announced by Philatelic Society President Dr. John H. Mercieca on Monday, May 7th. Following the ballot results, names were drawn for the various prizes.

First prize, an Air Malta ticket was won by Mr. A. Galdies, of 139A, Flat 3, St. Christopher Street, Valletta, Malta. The other three prizes, a complete mint 1978 Malta Collection, were won by the following: Mr. R. Scaresbrook, 12 Gunhild Close, Cambridge, Cambs., England; Mr. Harold Looft, 70 Windsor Road, Staten Island, N.Y. 10314, U.S.A.; Mr. Mohd. Arif. Balgamwala, 3/6 Saeeda Mansion, Burns Road, Karachi, Pakistan

The Editor will be pleased to discuss with members articles they would like to contribute to the PSM Magazine. Please write in the first instance to the Editor.

F.I.P. Commissions

The Philatelic Society has nominated the following members to sit on various Commissions of the Federation Internationale De Philatelie:

Postal History — Mr. Godwin Said.

Postal Stationery —

Mr. Anthony Fenech.

Philatelic Literature —

Mr. Nick A. Cutajar.

Thematic Philately —

Mr. Godwin Said.

Youth Philately —

Mr. Nick A. Cutajar.

Programme —

October-December 1979

The following programme for the Monthly Meetings covering the period October-December 1979 has been prepared:

Monday, 1st October 1979 —

“Village Postmarks” by P. Buttigieg.

Monday, 5th November 1979 —

Auction — Part I.

Monday, 3rd December 1979 —

Auction — Part II.

Mr. Ernest A. Kehr — June Meeting

The June Monthly Meeting was held on the 11th of the month and members present were entertained by Mr. Ernest Kehr, Executive Chairman of the International Philatelic Press Club. Mr. Kehr, who hails from Richmond Hill, New York, U.S.A., has a wide experience in philatelic journalism and philatelic events over a long period, and his talk provided enough stimulus to encourage further discussions during the meeting.

London 1980

London 1980, a major international stamp exhibition, is to be held at Earls Court, London from the 6th to the 14th May, 1980. The exhibition is being organized by a company called International Philatelic Exhibitions Limited under the sponsorship of the Royal Philatelic Society London, the British Post Office, the British Philatelic Federation, the the Philatelic Traders' Society, the Stamp Collecting Promotion Council of Great Britain, the National Philatelic Society and the Great Britain Philatelic Society.

The Exhibition's opening will coincide with the 140th Anniversary of the first day of issue of the world's first adhesive postage stamp, the Penny Black. It will be taking place just a few months after the centenary of the death of Sir Rowland Hill, the creator of the same stamp.

Mr. Godwin Said, Director of Messrs. Emmanuel Said, 43 Zachary Street, Valletta has been appointed Commissioner for Malta for this Exhibition. Regulations and other details will be given on application to all those interested in taking part.

Norwex '80

Between the 13th and 22nd June 1980, Norway will be organising an International Philatelic Exhibition in Oslo called Norwex '80.

The Exhibition is being organised jointly by the Federation of Norwe-

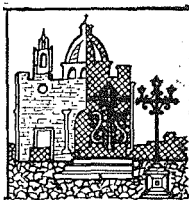
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RELIGION ON MALTA STAMPS

Part II

by ANTHONY FENECH

Christmas Stamps

Since 1964 Chev. Cremona has been designing stylish and highly decorative Christmas stamps for Malta, the island of his birth. In fact fifteen Christmas sets comprising 48 stamps, three triptychs and three miniature sheets have been issued so far. The themes of the stamps are varied — most depicting Nativity scenes, including the adoration of the Magi, folkloristic musicians, Heavenly angels and choir boys associated with Christmas time and the star of Bethlehem. The 1969 triptych has as its background Mdina Cathedral and Bastions, whilst the 1970 stamps are scenes against a background of three Maltese Churches. The Nativity scene chosen for the 1975 stamps is adapted from the original by Maestro Alberto (XV-XVI Century) and the 1976 stamps ensemble are a reproduction of "The Madonna and The Saints" by Domenico Di Michellino, at the National Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta. The 1977 Christmas stamps featured three figure compositions from the crib exhibited at the Discalced Carmelite Priory, Cospicua, Malta. The parishioners of Balzan are all eager to see the murals of their parish church finished by Chev. E.V. Cremona who when not designing stamps, is found high on a scaffolding within the dome of one or other of Malta's churches, producing yet another of the murals for which he has become renowned.

Churches

Churches depicted on Malta stamps are various and they provide a subject of immense scope for the thematic collector of religion on stamps. About twenty-one stamps issued by the Malta Post Office depict churches both in rural and urban areas as well as cathedrals. The 3d value of the 1938 and 1948 definitives, also the Royal Visit commemorative of 1954 presented an exterior view of St. John's Co-Cathedral, the Conventual Church of the Order of St. John. The 2/- definitive in the same series used from 1938 to 1956 depicted the Cathedral Church at Mdina, the old capital of Malta. The Cathedral was built in 1702(5) after an older church had been destroyed in an earthquake. It is worth mentioning here that this cathedral was floodlit during the celebrations marking the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935 and was an impressive sight for miles



around. This was the first example of floodlighting to achieve philatelic recognition.⁽⁶⁾ The 6d “French Occupation” stamp in the 1965 definitive series shows the facade of the Mdina Cathedral, where the main entrance once had the French emblems — “Phygian cap” and “fascines” — in the form of a medallion. This medallion is now in the Mdina Cathedral Museum.⁽⁷⁾ According to the contemporary Maltese architect Michael Ellul, the architecture on the facade shown on the stamp is one of the best examples of early Baroque art by Lorenzo Gafà in Malta.⁽⁸⁾ Two very popular stamps in the 1956 definitives were the 1d Victory Church skilfully reproduced from the original photograph and the 2d Mosta Church designed by the ingenious Maltese architect and engineer, Grognet de Vasse, in the nineteenth century. Both stamps were re-issued, a few years later, with Multiple Crown and Block CA watermark.

The one shilling value in the 1967 set commemorating the XV International Congress of History of Architecture shows sections of the facade of the Birkirkara Parish Church, typical of Renaissance Architecture. The interior of St. John’s Co-Cathedral, which according to Sir Walter Scott, “This is the most striking interior I have ever seen”, is depicted on the 5d value in the set issued in 1970 to mark the XIII Art Exhibition of the Council of Europe. The Sacristy door of the Cathedral Church at Mdina, representative of the Romanesque period, is depicted on the 3c value of the Europa set issued in 1974.

As has been referred to earlier, the 1970 Christmas stamps have Maltese churches in the background; even the 5c and £M1 definitives of 1973 show respectively fireworks against a Malta church, typical of Village Festas and an imaginary 18th/19th Century church signifying the deeply rooted Catholic religion of the Maltese people. ⁽⁹⁾

Two of Richard England’s set in the 1975 European Architectural Heritage Year show a silhouette of Mdina with the Cathedral dominating the scene and a typical Maltese village, with its magnificent Parish Church surrounded by characteristic houses.⁽¹⁰⁾ The 7c Europa stamp in the 1977 series, designed by George Fenech, shows “Ta’ l-Isperanza” countryside chapel, which according to Kilin was built in eleven months, between August 1760 and July 1761.⁽¹¹⁾

Our Lady

The Maltese have always had a strong devotion towards Our Lady, Mother of God, to whom most of the Maltese churches are dedicated and whose shrines and statues are venerated with great respect. In 1951 a set of three stamps was issued by the Malta Post Office to commemorate the VIIIth Centenary of the Scapular. The stamps, issued on July 12, were adapted from a painting in the Carmelite Basilica in Valletta. Barely three years later, exactly on September 8, 1954 another set of three stamps was issued, this time commemorating the Centenary of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, adapted from a reproduction of the Main Altarpiece of the Cospicua Collegiate Church.



The 2d value in the 1962 Great Siege Commemoration depicted the "Madonna Damascena" by Andrea Bresciano (Italian) "created" as an act of thanksgiving after the Siege of 1565.⁽¹²⁾ Two of the 1971 Religious Anniversaries stamps are reproductions of the statue of Our Lady of Victories venerated in the Senglea Collegiate Church.

As you can see, many Maltese stamps would find places in thematic collections featuring religion. Collecting Maltese stamps with religious significance is gaining ground and collections with the theme "Religion on Malta Stamps" have been awarded medals at local exhibitions and at Internationals as well.

REFERENCES:

- (5) Gibbons Stamp Monthly — September 1956.
- (6) Malta — "The Story of Malta and her Stamps" by James A. Mackay.
- (7) Gibbons Stamp Monthly — February 1965.
- (8) "Heritage of an Island — Malta — The Baroque" by Michael Ellul.
- (9) and (12) "Said Malta Catalogue — 1978."
- (10) "The Malta Stamp" — organ of the Philatelic Bureau, Malta Post Office.
- (11) "Kappelli u Knejjes žgħar" by M.C. Spiteri (Kilin).



S I R
R O W L A N D
H I L L

The adhesive postage stamp is such an ordinary article in this day and age that most of us take it for granted. One seldom spares a thought, as one licks the back, and sticks it on an envelope, for the tiny piece of printed paper, nor wonders how and why such a thing came into being. Well, on 17 August 1839, Queen Victoria was graciously pleased to give her Royal Assent to the Bill authorising the establishment of the Penny Post, and on 6 May 1840, the first postal adhesive label, bearing Her Majesty's portrait and the words "POSTAGE ONE PENNY", was placed on sale in Her Majesty's post offices.

Change was not unexpected, for after a long battle, the Postal Reformers, led by Rowland Hill, gained their point, and in December 1839 the way had been prepared, by the introduction of a system of charging a uniform pre-paid rate, for the delivery of letters to any address in the United Kingdom. This method would replace the complicated and inconvenient system of charging the recipient on a sliding scale, the amount due being relative to the distance travelled by the letter, and of collecting the amount due from the recipient.

Rowland Hill was born in Kidderminster on 3 December 1795, and his life was one continuous struggle from his appointment as Secretary to the Post Office until his retirement. During that period, there were many ideas and projects that entered his mind, but from 1836 to 1864, his thoughts were almost entirely devoted to postal questions and the various ramifications.

From early childhood, he had a strong mechanical bent. When he was only five years old, he had made a working model of a waterwheel, but owing to ill-health, it was not until he had reached the age of seven, that his schooling began. This took place at a school in Birmingham of which his father was the headmaster. At the age of eleven, he ably assisted as a teacher at the school, and two years later, he won a drawing prize open to the youth of England, for a landscape in water colours. He enjoyed sketching from nature, but to quote his own words: "At length, however, I discovered that I possessed no natural aptitude for the artistic profession, and consequently directed my efforts on other matters".

His interest in mechanical inventions continued in later life. For over fifty years, he had been a member of the Royal Astronomical Society. In 1857, on the recommendation of the Duke of Argyll, the Astronomer Royal, and other distinguished members, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society; and in 1867, he was elected to the council, of the society. In 1864, he received the honorary degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford. In the same year, he was presented with the Albert Gold Medal of the Society of Arts by the Prince of Wales.

However, Sir Rowland Hill will be best remembered as the proposer of "a bit of paper large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash which the user might, by applying a little moisture, attach to the back of a letter".

The history of the uniform penny postage system is an intriguing one, not without amusing elements. One story, though perhaps untrue, describes how Hill witnessed a touching incident. It is said that Hill saw a postman delivering a letter from London to a young village girl. Sadly, she was unable to accept it because the cost of postage was too great. He approached, but the girl was obviously embarrassed by his intervention. He questioned her and discovered that the letter was from her fiance working in London, but as she was too poor to afford his letters they had devised between them a clever stratagem. By means of various marks and signs, the girl's fiance was able to let her know that he was well and that he still loved her. Hill was genuinely disturbed by the girl's story and decided to devote his work to eliminating such deception. He concluded that there was a vicious circle in which expensive postal charges reduced the number of letters carried, and then forced the charges up in order to make the service pay its way.

In a pamphlet entitled "Post Office Reforms", Rowland Hill condemned the unwieldy methods involved in transmitting letters, which, he claimed, were mainly responsible for the problem. He proposed that the assessment of postage cost, depending on the number of sheets, including the wrapper as an extra sheet, and the distance travelled, should be scrapped. With the pamphlet completed, Hill confidently submitted his proposals to the Government. In it he explained that the adoption of a uniform rate would enable all letters to be prepaid, as the sender would then know the precise cost, and furthermore, the new proposed uniform rate would be assessed on weight alone, not by the number of enclosures. Also, if letters were prepaid, an immense amount of time and clerical work would be avoided; it would vastly reduce the time spent in delivering the letters, besides removing the temptation of purloining money to which letter carriers were then exposed. He proposed the adoption of four methods of prepaying postage; stamped letter sheets, stamped envelopes, the impression of a stamp on the stationery and "small stamped labels", which were to be the adhesive stamps that could be attached to letters.

Together with the presentation of his pamphlet, Hill indicated to the Government that during the early years following the reform, there would be a heavy loss of revenue. He went on to say that satisfied with his calculations, the heavy loss would soon, owing to the reduced rates, be recovered by the great increase in the volume of correspondence handled by the Post Office, and against the apparent loss, the stimulus given to trade by cheap postage would, to a large extent indirectly affect the loss.

Hill's ideas on reform caught the imagination of the public. The merchant classes were in favour of the reforms, as were the majority of the public, and the great advantages, apparent to all except certain Tories, who were annoyed with themselves for not having thought of it first, ensured that its symbol, the new adhesive label, would have a kindly welcome.

Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister put Hill's proposals to the vote, and they received the vote of confidence in both the House of Commons and in the House of Lords. Queen Victoria, in Her Speech from the Throne, at the close of the session graciously granted the Royal Assent:

"It has been with great satisfaction that I have given my consent to a reduction of the postal duties. I trust that the Act which has been passed on this subject will be a relief and encouragement to trade; and that by facilitating intercourse and correspondence, it will be productive of much social advantage and improvement. I have given directions that the preliminary steps should be taken to give effect to intention of Parliament, as soon as the enquiries and arrangements required for this purpose shall have been completed".

In December 1839, a Uniform Four Penny Post was introduced for a short experimental period while the Post Office adapted to the new system, but it was altered to one penny, or to give it its accepted name, the Penny Post, on January 1840.

When Lord Melbourne's Liberal Government was defeated in the General Elections of 1842, Hill was dismissed from his position at the Treasury. With the return of the Whigs in 1846, he was appointed Secretary to the Postmaster General, in order to supervise and reorganise postal procedure, which was once again in an unsatisfactory state.

Whilst in office, Rowland Hill fought and campaigned to improve postal services. He introduced a time-saving device with regard to the sorting of late Saturday letters. He thought of a system to implement the speeding-up of deliveries. In 1855, he endeavoured to arrange for a Post Office underground

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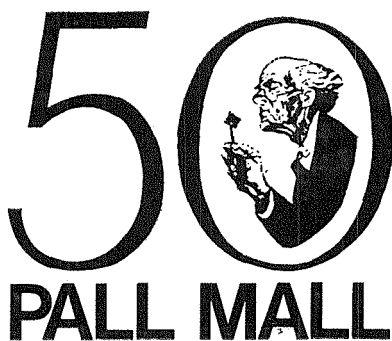
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LAURENZ KOSCHIER AND THE CONCEPT OF THE STAMP

It is now 100 years since Laurenz Koschier died in Vienna. During his life, he stubbornly maintained to be the inventor of the Stamp. History has a way of sidetracking important events and people who had something to contribute to society. But then it depends on who is writing history and for whom.

Considering the standards of that time, the outward course of Koschier's life cannot be called particularly remarkable. The son of a farmer, Laurenz (or Lorenz) Koschier was born on July 29 1804 in Unter-Luscha near Bischoflak, in the then Upper Carniolan area. Between 1819 and 1925, he attended the secondary school in Laibach, (today known as Ljubljana). Soon after leaving school, he was employed for a short term at the Office for Military provisions in Laibach, proceeding to the civil service as an accountant at the Venetian Government Accountancy. He was subsequently active in Klagenfurt, Villach, Agram (now Zagreb) and Milan, as well as at the Court Postal Accountancy in Vienna.

To live in the metropolis, with residency in Vienna, and work at the postal administration, was of prime importance to the ambitious and ingenious civil servant Laurenz Koschier. In Vienna, he formulated and presented his life-work — an entirely new concept for the payment of postal charges.

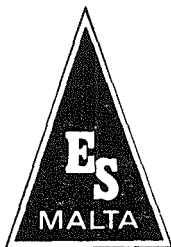
On December 31, 1835, Laurenz Koschier approached the Minister of Finance of the Austrian Government and presented him a report on the running of the postal service. In the report, Koschier included several reformatory ideas and plans concerning the then very complicated letter handling, and proposed among other reforms, that the postage on letters be paid by using "letter tax stamps".

Emmanuel Said

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(It is believed that Rowland Hill's inspiration to draft his paper proposing the use of postage stamps, occurred in the late 1830's after reading of the strong criticisms in Parliament of the state of the Post Office in Britain. The principal cause of political and indeed of public unrest was the high cost of postage).

However, Laurenz Koschier's propositions, epoch-making innovations with the improvements they were to render, did not meet with the slightest understanding by the Austrian Minister of Finance. A reformer of his stature was to his superiors obviously irritating and unwelcome. Thus, the Viennese authorities arranged a transfer of the, in their view, overzealous official.

So in 1851, Laurenz Koschier took up post at the Royal and Imperial Government Accountancy Office for Croatia and Slovenia in Agram, where six years later he reached the peak of his career with the appointment as vice-government accountant. In his private life, he found little happiness in Agram. In 1872 he was, for political reasons, forced to retire. Within a short period he lost his wife and both his children. Disappointed in his private life, unrecognized for his ingenuity by his authorities, Koschier moved to Vienna where he died lonely on August 7, 1879.

For a few decades it seemed as if with Koschier's death, his lifework too would be forgotten. But, fortunately, the tireless inventor had never kept his ideas to himself but again and again had them publicized in applications, petitions and newspaper articles. Postal historians of our century could therefore clearly defend Koschier's inventions and contributions towards a better postal service.

The 1835 reformatory plans are not Koschier's only efforts to the Austrian Post Office. In 1849 Laurenz Koschier developed a new concept for the sale of stamps and invented what we today call as "stamp booklets". After stamps had been introduced officially in Austria in 1850, Laurenz Koschier designed postage stamps in the form of transfer pictures, to prevent later manipulations such as detachments from the cover and reuse. In fact, some postal historians argue that postal cards, which were introduced for the first time, in Austria in 1869, were an invention of Laurenz Koschier.

There can be no doubt that Laurenz Koschier, in spite of his personal failure, can be numbered among the first pioneers of the stamp. This fundamental concept for which understanding was lacking in Austria, became in 1840 a reality at the British Post Office. Austria lost the opportunity to claim for itself the title or the privilege of issuing stamps without its name appearing on them.

Incidentally, as soon as Great Britain issued the first stamp, Koschier immediately claimed that his idea had been exported to Britain by an English merchant on frequent visits to Austria. However, this important statement has until today, neither directly nor indirectly been proved, because none of the known written documents contain any evidence to support the claim.

The question, whether Laurenz Koschier is indeed the author of the concept of the stamp, or whether Laurenz Koschier is indeed the author of the researchers who believe in several independently working "inventors" and talk of a "parallelism of ideas" owing to time and circumstances, can possibly never be solved with any certainty. Whatever the truth, the dates and facts speak for themselves. There the merits of this intelligent, creative and inventive Austrian accountant should no longer be neglected. A place of honour in the history of Austrian philately has been secured for him when the Austrian Post Office on May 4, 1979 issued a single stamp paying homage to Laurenz Koschier. The stamp shows a portrait of Laurenz Koschier and the wording on top "Pionier der Briefmarke" (Pioneer of this Stamp). The stamp was Austria's offering in the "Europa" series, which this year, had as a theme "The History of the Postal Service and Telecommunications". The single stamp is indeed a befitting tribute and converges all the attention on this man for whom destiny had obscure offerings. ■

Continued from page 12

railway to expedite the transit of mail across London. However, this project did not materialise until 1927, seventy-two years later. In 1856, he divided London into ten postal districts: NW, W, SW, S, SE, E, WE, N, WC, EC, each district being treated as a different town and having its own district office.

Hill was awarded the KCB in 1860 and after a period of ailing health, he decided to resign in 1864. Sir Rowland was presented with the Freedom of the City of London in 1879, but his physical deterioration meant that he was unable to attend the Guildhall ceremony; he had to receive the deputation in his bedroom. On 27 August 1879, he passed away in the presence of his devoted wife.

So died the man whose postal reforms highlight the modern history of the most basic means of human communication. He not only had the ingenuity and the resourcefulness to discover and develop his ideas, but the faculties of self-control, independence and self-discipline. With these potent characteristics, he was able to fulfil his plan of postal reform, to which, from the year 1836 he had devoted his life. ■

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JOSEPH FARRUGIA

END OF MILITARY FACILITIES AGREEMENT ISSUE

Date of Issue	31st March 1979.
Values	2c, 5c, 7c, 8c, 17c and 20c.
Stamp Size	26.5mm x 35mm.
Art Designer	Chev. Emvin Cremona.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.4 x 13.5.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalked surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

The colour of these stamps was produced by the multi-colour process.

Designs

The Malta Postal Administration is marking the historic event of the End of the Military Facilities Agreement with Britain by the issue of this set. The year 1979 heralds the beginning of a new era for the Republic of Malta with the Island's change from a military base to a centre of peace in the Mediterranean. After continuous domination by various peoples and countries since the first settlers crossed over from nearby Sicily about 6,000 years ago, in 1964 Malta attained its Independence within the British Commonwealth. In 1974 Malta became a Democratic Republic, founded on work and on respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual.

On the 31st. March 1979, Malta discards completely its traditional fortress role and fashion a new way of life based on peace, determined to earn her livelihood through honest endeavour and initiatives in the field of manufacturing, ship repair, ship building, agriculture, fishing, commerce, tourism and other services.

This set consists of three designs, each common to two stamps. The first, showing fishing from a multi-coloured "luzzu" with an aircraft carrier in the background, is common to the 2c and 8c stamps.

The design for the 5c and 17c stamps show a boiler-suited worker shaking hands with a British sailor holding the Union Jack on his arm while in the background a Maltese worker is seen hoisting the Maltese Flag which is being saluted by a bugler from the Armed Forces of Malta. The 7c and 20c stamps show a British soldier in full kit and carrying a rifle, going past an orange branch. All stamps carry a common legend, "HELSEIEN—SLIEM" meaning "FREE—DOM—PEACE"

Colour Checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin next to the last stamps of the two bottom rows. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right on all Panes of all values.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in the top and bottom margins of Panes. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in maroon in the 2c, 5c and 7c values and in dark blue in the 8c, 17c and 20c values. The Printed Sheets of all six values consisted of three Panes, "A", "B" and "C". Each Pane has 50 stamps made up of ten rows of five stamps. All stamps are of the vertical format. Plate/Pane Numbers:

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row.

2c = 1A x 7, 1B x 7, 1C x 7.

5c = 1A x 7, 1B x 7, 1C x 7.

7c = 1A x 7, 1B x 7, 1C x 7.

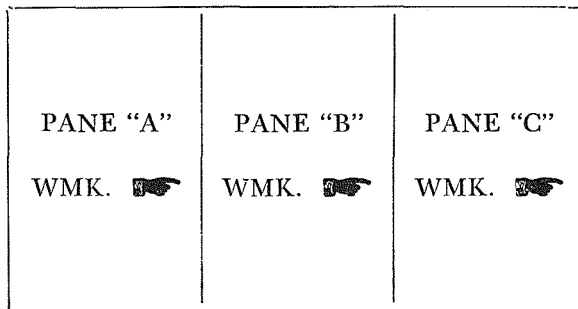
8c = 1A x 7, 1B x 7, 1C x 7.

17c = 1A x 7, 1B x 7, 1C x 7.

20c = 1A x 7, 1B x 7, 1C x 7.

Perforation of Margins

The top margins of Panes "A", "B" and "C" of all values are imperforate. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins of Panes "A", "B" and "C" of all values are fully perforated.



From a study of all details given, the Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting, would look as shown on left. With the Printed Sheet as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why the watermark on individual stamps is sideways.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTED LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in maroon in the 2c, 5c and 7c values and in dark blue in the 8c, 17c and 20c values. An Imprint Block of four, of any value, will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.

Up to 1p.m. on the first day of issue, £M78,121 worth of stamps were sold. Normally the G.P.O. is kept open for sale up to 4p.m. on the first days of issue. However the G.P.O. closed at 1p.m. because the 31st. March was a public holiday. This set will remain on sale up to Monday, 16th. July 1979, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

EUROPA 1979 ISSUE

Date of Issue	9th May 1979.
Values	7c and 25c.
Stamp Size	27mm x 33mm.
Art Designer	Chev. Emvin Cremona.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.9 x 13.7.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalk surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

The colour of these stamps was produced by patchwork using multi-colours.

Designs

The 1979 "Europa" stamp set, depicts as part of the general theme "History of Postal and Telecommunications Services" past and present day methods of mail transport and communications.

The 7c stamp features a "Maltese Speronara" and the tail fin of an Air Malta aircraft. The "Maltese Speronara" was a small open vessel equipped with sails and oars. It was designed to ride the waves and to sail to any port in the Mediterranean. The Order of St. John continuously employed the "Maltese Speronara" on several commissions, especially to carry official and private despatches to the galley squadrons or to the continent.

The 25c stamp depicts a coastal Watch Tower and a Radio-Link Tower. During the rule of the Order of St. John in Malta, many coastal Watch Towers were added, especially through the initiative of Grandmaster Martino De Redin (1657-1660) to the one already existing before the Order settled in the Maltese Islands in 1530. These towers served as a means of communication in case of enemy raids, or in other emergencies, through the conveyance of messages, from tower to tower, by gunfire, rocket, flag, fire or smoke signals.

This is the ninth Europa Set, issued by the G.P.O. and has again been printed in small Panes of ten stamps. Both values are of the vertical format. Each Pane is divided into twelve spaces, three rows of four. The third space of the top row is used for the wording "EUROPA 1979", the C.E.P.T. symbol and a "Maltese Speronara" as seen on the 7c stamp. The fourth space of the top row is again used for the wording "Europa 1979", the C.E.P.T. symbol and a "Watch Tower" as seen on the 25c stamp. The value of a whole Pane of stamps is seen in the middle of the top margin, and printed in the same colour as that of the top disc in the colour checks of each value.

Colour Checks, in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, of each Pane, next to the last stamp of the bottom row. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right on all Panes of both values. There are nine Panes of ten stamps, "A" to "I" to each Printed Sheet, of each value.

Plate/Pane Numbers










These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in each Pane of both values.

7c = 1A x 6 up to and including 11 x 6.

25c = 1A x 6 up to and including 11 x 6.

Perforation of Margins

The top margin of Panes "A", "B" and "C" of both values are imperforate, but the top margin of Panes "D", "E", "F", "G", "H" and "I" are fully perforated. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins of all Panes from "A" to "I" in both values are also fully perforated.

"A" WMK. 	"B" WMK. 	"C" WMK. 
"D" WMK. 	"E" WMK. 	"F" WMK. 
"G" WMK. 	"H" WMK. 	"I" WMK. 

The Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, would have looked as shown on left. The perforator ran from Panes "A", "B", "C" to Panes "D", "E", "F" to Panes "G", "H", "I". Looking at the Printed Sheet as shown stamps of both values would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in individual stamps is sideways.

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint, "PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA", is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and again printed in the same colour as the top disc of the colour checks.

A special hand-postmark was used on the first day of issue for cancellation. It is inscribed, "L-EWWEL JUM TAL-HERUG", "MALTA", "EUROPA", the name of the respective locality and the date "9.5.79". A "Maltese Speronora" is also incorporated in the postmark. This set will remain on sale up to Friday, 9th November, 1979, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

A total of £M258,189 worth of "Europa" '79 stamps was sold from the G.P.O. and other Post Offices up to 4 p.m. on the first day of issue. ■

Continued from page 5.

gian Philatelists and the Norwegian Post Office to mark the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Norwegian stamps. It is being held under the patronage of the Federation Internationale de Philatelie (F.I.P.) and subject to its rules.

The Norwegian Trade Fair building located at Stylist between the centre of Oslo and the airport will house the exhibition.

Regulations and other details will

be given to all would be exhibitors on application from Mr. Godwin Said, 43 Zachary Street, Valletta. ■

SMALL ADS are charged at 2c per word, including name and address; minimum charge 50c. Members of the Philatelic Society qualify for one free advert in any one year of not more than 30 words, provided their membership dues have not lapsed. All copies must be received two months prior to publication date.

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1960 — St. Paul's Centenary at	£ 2.50,0
1965 — Siege at	£ 3.00,0
1971 — Christmas M/s at	20,0
1972 — Christmas M/s at	20,0
1973 — Europa Sheetlets at	£M 2.50,0
1973 — Christmas sets at	25,0
1973 — Christmas M/S at	30,0
1974 — Europa Sheetlets at	£ 3.00,0
1976 — Europa Sheetlets at	£M 3.00,0
1978 — Durer at	35,0

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We also buy Malta used stamps in quantity and Foreign Collections.

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STAMPING AROUND WITH NICK

S.M.O.M. — Justice Done

After almost thirteen years of arguments and polemics, since its introduction in the philatelic world with "pseudo-stamps" in November 1966, the road is now open for a postal and philatelic recognition of the right of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to issue its own stamps to frank mail matter originating from the S.M.O.M. state in 'Via Condotti' and on the 'Avventino'. The word "state" is not loosely applied here, since we are talking here of an entity with its own political and diplomatic structures, recognized internationally.

On March 13, 1979 at the Ministry of Posts in Rome, the Hon. Antonio Gullotti, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications and His Excellency Count Bernardo Combi di Cesana, on behalf of the S.M.O.M. signed a postal agreement between the Italian Postal Authorities and that of the S.M.O.M. Under this agreement, which after it is officially approved will be valid for ten years, the Italian Postal Administration has recognized the validity of the stamps of the Order and letters bearing such stamps will be delivered to destinations in Italy as well as over Italian territory when such letters are addressed to countries with which the

Order has similar bilateral postal agreements.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta signed the first bilateral postal agreement with the Republic of Malta in 1975, and ratified it the following year. Subsequently two other agreements were signed, one with Nicaragua and the other with Liberia last year. This year, the Republic of El Salvador too signed a similar agreement on February 7th, and according to reliable sources other postal agreements are proposed for later this year.

S.M.O.M. — The news of the Postal Agreement between the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and Italy took us all by surprise. The Agreement provides for full postal recognition and validity of the S.M.O.M. issues within the Italian territory, and its provisions extend over a ten-year period. Naturally, catalogue editors will now rethink their decision to drop the listing of S.M.O.M. issues, though it has already been hinted that only those stamps which are issued after the agreement has become operative will be listed. The agreement provides for letters and parcels addressed to places within the Italian territory as well as those destined to countries with which the S.M.O.M. have other bilateral postal agreements, namely Nicaragua, El Salvador and Liberia. Thus postal

validity is restricted to Italy and the aforementioned countries.

The S.M.O.M.-Italy postal agreement will provoke significant repercussions in the philatelic world, as well as the commercial sector. It is reliably understood that whereas the Order used to print some 100,000 of each denomination, as from this year, a figure near to the million mark is on schedule. The local printers, Printex Ltd., of Qormi took over the printing of the S.M.O.M. stamps following the Bilateral Postal Agreement with Malta on March 1st, 1975. Although the agreement remained valid for two years, Printex Ltd. still were commissioned with the printing of the S.M.O.M. stamps.

Doubts have been expressed whether the local firm will continue to print the issues of the S.M.O.M. In that eventuality it will be Malta's loss unfortunately.

New Comers

Two new names have been added to the list of countries issuing stamps with the "Europa" theme — the Faroe Islands and Gibraltar. The Faroes are new comers in the philatelic world having already attracted collector demand substantially and for their "Europa" initiation, two Danish stamps provisionally used in the Faroe Islands have been reproduced. Gibraltar on the other hand produced three stamps with a common design, but without the "CEPT" motif.

Juvaphil '79



Youth philately is still in its infancy in Malta and the few young collectors who take stamp-collecting seriously is indeed very limited. So it is an occasion when Maltese young philatelists participate in philatelic exhibitions overseas. So it was an important milestone, when four young Maltese collectors, for the first time, participated in a philatelic exhibition overseas, namely "JUVAPHIL '79", the Second Exhibition for Young Philatelists of the European Community, organized by "Le Cercle Philatelique Alfred-de-Vigny" in Courbevoie between 26-29 April, 1979. Two very important occasions — the elections for the European Assembly, and the 30th Anniversary of the Council of Europe — made JUVAPHIL '79 a well-patronised philatelic event.

Each of the four Maltese participants have been awarded a Bronze medal for their efforts and it is with pleasure that we record the names:

Joseph Godwin Agius (18 years) — "Malta European Theme".

Joseph Fenech (12½ years) — "Malta Europa Issues" (with Prize of Honour).

Marika Micallef (15½ years) — "The History of Malta Through Stamps".

George Tedesco (18½ years) — "30th Anniversary of the Council of Europe".

Malta on the Solomons

An interesting coincidence will occur on August 16th this year when the Solomon Islands issue their commemorative set to mark the Centenary of Sir Rowland Hill. The issue consists of three stamps, valued at 8c, 20c and 35c plus a Souvenir Sheet with a face value of 45c; each of the three stamps feature a reproduction of various stamps, including an 1856 GB 6d lilac on the 20c, (which originally was planned to be a used copy but now to appear in mint condition). But the Souvenir Sheet provides a lot more attraction since it shows a full-scale reproduction of a "Mulready Envelope" superimposed on which a stamp in similar design to the other three stamps (reproducing the British Solomon Islands 1922 10c green and red). The "Mulready Envelope" illustrated on the S.S. is franked with a Penny Black and addressed: "Mrs Tonna, 173 Strada Forni, Malta".

Post Routes, Chariots, Couriers

Herodatus, the Greek historian, wrote about the Persian Postal System of 500 B.C. in the following words: "... neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds". This quotation is inscribed on the facade of the G.P.O. in New York City.

Caesar Augustus (63 BC — AD 14) the first Roman Emperor, created the first "modern" postal system. He built fine roads for his messengers.

Roman post roads had horses and couriers placed or "posted" along them on the alert in post houses, equipped with chariots. Our word "post" is from the Latin word "positum", meaning "to place".

In his book, completed in 1298, Marco Polo described Kublai Khan's prosperous and advanced Chinese empire. He described the Khan's postal system, which consisted of courier stations networked throughout the kingdom, with riders on horseback relaying messages. China had then 10,000 postal stations.

The Aztec, the Amerindian people whose civilization flourished in Central Mexico between the 12th and 16th century, had devised a parcel post system designed to facilitate the distribution of fresh fish among the villages in the 1200's.

On the other hand, Inca couriers carried messages throughout their South American empire seven hundred years ago. Messages travelled 150 miles a day. The runners were spaced about three miles apart along the 5,000 mile stone road from Colombia to Santiago.

The Burgee Flies the Wrong Way

Writing in "The Sunday Times" of 12.5.1979, local journalist John A. Mizzi points out a design error on the 7c "Europa 1979" issue. Mr. Mizzi is a sailing enthusiast and is of the opinion that the burgee, the small flag atop the mast, is blowing in the wrong direction, pointing out

that:

"In a craft like the speronara with two lanteen sails up and the wind on the starboard quarter, the flag will blow towards the stern and not the bow for the simple reason that such a boat is in fact faster in movement than the wind that propels it". He amplifies the statement by explaining that "in favourable circumstances an 18-knot wind on properly designed sails propels the boat at 30 knots". Some food for thought that is.

Hope and Crosby Entertain Airletter

Entertainers Bob Hope and the late Bing Crosby are featured in cartoon form on an airletter recently put on sale by the British Post Office. The airletter — the tenth in the Scottish pictorial series — went on sale on April 25 and has golf as the theme, featuring the famous club at St. Andrews prominently. The main pictorial panel is arguably the most recognisable sight in golf — the 18th green and clubhouse of the Royal

and Ancient Gold Club of St. Andrews. Hope and Crosby have had a long association with St. Andrews as golfing enthusiasts.

The Black Swan

The most outstanding philatelic item ever to be auctioned in Australia — a block of the "Black Swan" 1d stamps of 1854 — went up for sale by Stanley Gibbons in Melbourne on May 31. The block comprises 48 stamps and is the largest known multiple in existence. It was originally part of a sheet which was offered for sale in 1943 for £1,200.

Printed by Perkins and Bacon, the Black Swan was issued on 1 August 1854 and is Western Australia's first and most famous stamp. The stamp's "swan" motif was taken from the seal of the Colony, while the background design was adapted from Britain's own first adhesive postage stamp, the Penny Black. However, over 68 million Penny Blacks were printed and issued, whereas only one million Black Swans were ever printed. ■

SMALL ADS

WANTED: In exchange or Purchase Used Malta. Write to: Dd. Rajamany, 84 Jalan Satu, Desa Java, Kepong, Selangor, Malaysia.

EXCHANGE: Send me 100 or 200 Malta in exchange for Spain new or cancelled. Jose A. Antich, San Andres 374, Barcelona 30, Spain.

MALTA — A DIARY

January-April 1979

compiled by
JOSEPH FARRUGIA

- 2-1-79 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "NEXT STAMP ISSUE — FLEMISH TAPESTRIES SET — 24 JANUARY 1979", was used on and off, during the period 2nd January to 23rd January 1979, at the Central Mail Room.
- 12-1-79 In today's Government Gazette, the Minister of Development, Energy, Port and Telecommunications has approved the opening of a Sub-Post Office at Xaghra and at Nadur, Gozo. Applications for the two posts of Sub-Postmaster at these localities were to be received by the Postmaster General, up to 5 p.m. on Monday 29th January 1979.
- 19-1-79 The 4m stamp of the present Decimal Definitive Postage Set has been reprinted by Printex Limited Malta. It was available from the Philatelic Bureau.
- 24-1-79 "Flemish Tapestries" set issued today. This set will remain on sale up to Friday, 22nd June, 1979 unless stocks are previously exhausted. A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.
- 25-1-79 The Postmaster General notified that, to mark the centenary of the birth of Antonio Sciortino, the well known Maltese sculptor, a special hand-postmark was used on the 25th January, 1979 at the Central Room, Valetta. The special hand-postmark is inscribed: "ANTONIO SCIORTINO — 1879-1979 — CENTINARJU TAT-TWELID — 25.1.79 — VALLETTA — MALTA". The only difficult part in the postmark for our overseas members is "CENTINARJU TAT-TWELID", meaning "Birth Centenary". The sculptor's tools, a hammer and a chisel, are incorporated in the postmark.
- 26-1-79 A machine stamp cancelling slogan, to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Air Rally of Malta, was used during the period 26th January to 31st January, 1979 at the Central Mail Room, Valetta. The slogan reads: "INTERNATIONAL AIR RALLY OF MALTA — 10th ANNIVERSARY — 23-27 JUNE 1979". A silhouette of an aeroplane in flight is also incorporated in the slogan.
- 7-2-79 The last First Day Cover cancelled by the Field Post Office at Luqa was the "British Dogs" set, issued on 7th February, 1979. The normal double ring 1001 handstamp was used for cancellation. The Field Post Office will close in late March.
- 8-2-79 The Postmaster General notified that the new hand date-stamps were put in use on Thursday, 8th February, 1979 at the localities indicated hereunder:
Sub-Post Office, St. Julians
1 hand date-stamp
Branch Post Office, Mosta
3 hand date-stamp
Branch Post Office, Zejtun
2 hand date-stamp
Branch Post Office, Żabbar
2 hand date-stamp
Branch Post Office, Rabat
1 hand date-stamp
The new hand date stamps are

inscribed with the name of the respective locality and the word "MALTA". The old hand date-stamps which were replaced, were withdrawn from use at the close of business on Wednesday, 7th February, 1979.

- 11-2-79 To mark the opening of the Mediterranean Conference Centre, a special hand-postmark was used at the Counter Hall, G.P.O., Valletta, between 8.00 a.m. and 12.00, on Sunday, 11th February, 1979. The special hand-postmark is inscribed: "FTUĦ TA' DAR IL-MEDITERRAN GĦALL-KONFERENZI — 11.2.1979 — VALLETTA — MALTA", meaning "Opening of the Mediterranean Conference Centre — 11.2.1979 — Valletta — Malta". The Emblem of Malta is also incorporated in the postmark.
- 13-2-79 The Postmaster General notified that on the occasion of the holding of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Meeting of Experts on the Mediterranean 1979, a Temporary Branch Post Office was to be opened at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta. This Branch Post Office was open from the 13th February to the 23rd March, 1979 for the exclusive use of the participants at the meeting. The hours of business of the Temporary Branch Post Office were: Mondays to Fridays 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. The following postal business was transacted:
- (a) Sale of Postage stamps and Postal stationery.
 - (b) Registration of letters.
 - (c) Issue and payment of Money and Postal Orders.
 - (d) Posting of parcels.
- Postal articles posted at this

Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked with a special date-stamp inscribed with the following words: "CSCE MEETING OF EXPERTS ON THE MEDITERRANEAN 1979 VALLETTA, MALTA".

Persons wishing to obtain an impression of this special date-stamp were to submit their requirement in writing to the Officer in Charge, Philatelic Bureau, Valletta, enclosing the required philatelic material and covering remittance where necessary.

- 25-2-79 To mark the 50th Anniversary of the Death of Anton Nani, the well-known Maltese music composer, a special hand-postmark was used at the Counter Hall of the GPO Valletta, on Sunday (25th February, 1979 between 8.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon. The special hand-postmark is inscribed: "ANTON NANI — 1929-1979 — HAMSIN SENA MILL-MEWT — 25.2.79 — VALLETTA MALTA". For the benefit of overseas members, "HAMSIN SENA MILL-MEWT" means "Fifty Years Since Death". A lyre surrounded by laurel leaves are incorporated in the postmark.
- 1-3-79 The Postmaster General notified for general information that an agreement has been signed between the Dutch and the Malta Postal Administration for the encashment of Dutch payment cards in Malta. The new service which came into effect on 1st March, 1979 enables entitled holders of Dutch Giro Cards to withdraw from local Post Offices any amount in Maltese currency up to a maximum of £M30 on each card presented.
- 9-3-79 The Malta Post Office participated in "Interprex 79" Philatelic Exhi-

- bition which was held at the New York Coliseum, New York. The exhibition was organised by the American Stamps Dealers' Association.
- 12-3-79 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "World Maritime Day — 16 March 1979 — Safer Shipping — And Cleaner Oceans", was used from the 12th to 16th March 1979, at the Central Mail Room.
- 13-3-79 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "Next Stamp Issue — End of Military Facilities — Agreement Set — 31 March 1979", was used on and off, during the period 13th March to 30th March 1979, at the Central Mail Room.
- 15-3-79 To mark the Malta International Book Fair 1979, a special hand-postmark was used at the Counter Hall of the G.P.O. and the Central Mail Room, on the 15th, 16th and 17th March 1979, during normal business hours. The postmark was also used at the Counter Hall of the G.P.O. from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon on Sunday, 18th March, 1979.
The postmark is inscribed: "Malta International — Book Fair 1979 — 15.3.79 — Valletta — Malta". A line drawing symbolizing a book is also incorporated in the postmark.
- 16-3-79 The 1c3 stamp of the present Decimal Definitive Postage Set has been reprinted by Printex Limited Malta. This is the second reprint or the third printing of this value. Panes "A", "B", "C" and "D" were issued for sale by the Philatelic Bureau.
- 20-3-79 The Postmaster General notified that none of the 77 designs entered in the competition for the set of postage stamps to mark the End of the Military Facilities Agreement with Britain was selected for stamp reproduction.
The artistic level and the concept of several of the designs were very good but none was considered sufficiently suitable for the proposed stamps.
In view of the good standard of their entries, the competitors who submitted the sets under the noms-de-plume "V8", "Gemini" and "Xemx" which were placed first, second and third will each be awarded a consolation prize of £M50, £M20 and £M15 respectively.
- 27-3-79 The Minister of Development, Energy, Port and Telecommunications approved the opening of a Sub-Post Office at Sliema in the area covering the following localities — The Strand from the bottom of St. Pius V Street to Bisazza Street, Bisazza Street, Tower Road from St. Anne Square to Ghar id-Dud Street and Cathedral Street between Tower Road and St. Peter Street. Applications for the post of Sub-Postmaster at this locality were to be received by the Postmaster General, up to 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 23rd April, 1979.
- 27-3-79 The last Field Post Office in Malta closed today. It was commonly known as Luqa F.P.O. Three handstamps were in use at this F.P.O. Two metal handstamps, 1001 for ordinary mail and 1040 for registered mail. Another rubber handstamp 107 was used for parcels. What happened on the last day, I cannot say exactly, because both my ordinary and registered covers were cancelled with the 1001 handstamp, but I have examples of both the other handstamps 1040 and 107, dated December and October 1978.
- 31-3-79 The End of Military Facilities Agreement with Britain" set issued today. A special hand-postmark was used on the first day of issue. It is inscribed: "L-Ewwel Jum tal-~~FF~~rug", "~~FF~~elsien u Sliem",

"Malta" and the name of the respective locality together with the date "31.3.79". The words inscribed mean "First Day of Issue", "Freedom and Peace".

5-4-79 The Postmaster General notified that on the occasion of the first flight Malta/Kuwait/Dubai by Air Malta on the 5th April 1979, the Malta Post Office was using at the Philatelic Bureau, two special hand-postmarks each indicating the date of the first flight and place of destination. (See note after date 7-4 79).

7-4-79 The Postmaster General notified that on the occasion of the first flight Malta/Lyons by Air Malta on the 7th April, 1979 the Malta Post Office was using at the Philatelic Bureau, a special hand-postmark indicating the date of the first flight and the place of destination.

Note: It is of interest to note that the Kuwait covers were returned back stamped at "Safat" with the date "5th April" corresponding to the front cover cancellations, meaning they were returned on the same flight. The Dubai covers are back stamped at "Dubai" with the date "7th April" as they were not returned on the same flight which also left Malta on the 5th April as can be seen from the front cover cancellations. Also of interest, covers and envelopes used for these first flights will be found with the date printed or typed on the front (including Said covers) not corresponding with the hand-postmark cancellations used on the actual first flight. This includes the "Lyons" covers. The reason for this is, that the first notice

appearing in the Government Gazette gave the dates and places of first flights as follows:

Malta/Lyons — 5th April 1979.

Malta/Kuwait/Dubai — 7th April 1979.

When the actual first flights took place, the dates were changed, i.e. Malta/Kuwait/Dubai — 5th April 1979.

Malta/Lyons — 7th April 1979.

But by that time, all covers were already printed or typed and handed over to the Philatelic Bureau.

17-4-79 The Postmaster General notified that registration envelopes in size "H" (large) with the SIX PENCE registration fee stamp obliterated and bearing a new registration fee stamp, incorporating the Emblem of Malta, with the words, "SITT ĊENTEŻMI — REGISTRAZJONI — MALTA", meaning "SIX CENTS — REGISTRATION — MALTA", were available for sale as from today, Tuesday, 17th April, 1979. The selling price of these registration envelopes is 7c5 each.

23-4-79 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "Next Stamp Issue — Europa '79 Set — 9 May 1979" was used on and off, during the period 23rd April to 8th May, 1979 at the Central Mail Room. ■

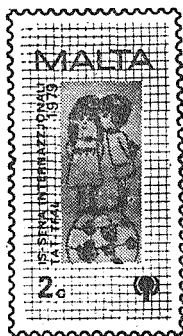
MONTHLY MEETINGS

Always (keep the first Monday of the month free of any appointments. Make sure you are always able to attend the monthly meetings. And bring a guest with you. The warm friendly atmosphere is always in evidence.

REPUBLIC OF MALTA

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

13TH JUNE 1979



DESIGNS BY

Anton Pisani
(10 years)

Alexandra Bonnici
(11 years)

Michelle Fenech
(9 years)

Orders and Requests for further information should be sent to:

THE PHILATELIC BUREAU
GENERAL POST OFFICE
AUBERGE D'ITALIE
MERCHANTS STREET
VALLETTA — MALTA