

Malta - A DIARY

Compiled by JOE FARRUGIA

- 11-2-76 The two hand date-stamps in use at the Mosta Branch Post Office were withdrawn at the close of business on Wednesday, February 11. They were replaced by two new hand date-stamps, inscribed with the words "MOSTA — MALTA" as from Thursday, February 12.
- 1-4-76 New postal rates, inland and overseas, were published in separate legal notices in the Government Gazette of Tuesday, March 16. The new rates as well as new regulations on post office private boxes, came into force on April 1, that is at the beginning of the 1976/77 financial year. The increases in postal rates were announced by the Finance Minister, Dr. Joseph Abela, in his Budget speech on February 27.
- 1-4-76 Three new "postage paid" hand-stamps were used at the Central Mail Room, Valletta and at each Branch Post Office as from Thursday, April 1. The denominations were 5m, 1c and 2c respectively. All "postage paid" hand-stamps used previously at the G.P.O. and at Branch Post Offices were withdrawn at the close of business on Wednesday, March 31.
Registration envelopes in sizes "G" (small) and "H" (large) with 4 cent registration fee stamp obliterated and bearing a new registration fee stamp, incorporating the Emblem of Malta, were put on sale at the G.P.O., Branch Post Offices and Sub-Post Offices as from Thursday, April 1. The selling price of the registration envelope is, "G" size 7c each, "H" size 7c5 each.
- 1-4-76 A new hand date-stamp was used at the Gżira Branch Post Office as from Thursday, April 1. The date-stamp is inscribed with the words "GŻIRA — MALTA". The old date-stamp was withdrawn at the close of business on Wednesday, March 31.
- 7-4-76 A special machine stamp cancelling slogan reading, "World Health Day Foresight Prevents Blindness" was used at the Central Mail Room, Valletta on Wednesday, April 7.
- 20-4-76 A list of postage stamps, bearing sterling currency denominations issued in Malta from May 12, 1937, to March 20, 1972, which will no longer be valid for prepayment of postage as from October 20, 1976, was published in the Government Gazette of Friday, April 20. Any postal article stamped with such postage stamps, on or after October 20, will be deemed to be not duly stamped for the purposes of the Post Office Act, 1975.
As from October 20 and up to six months later, persons still in possession of stamps invalidated may surrender them to the Postmaster General, who will exchange them for other valid postage stamps of an equal value.
- 3-5-76 The Central Mail Room, Castile Place, Valletta as from Monday, May 3, started using three "postage paid" machine stamps. The stamps are inscribed with the words "Valletta/Malta Paid", and the respective denomination and date.
- 5-5-76 A special machine stamp-cancelling slogan, reading "5 TA' MEJJU 1976 — JUM L-EWROPA" (May 5, 1976 — Europa Day) was used at the Central Mail Room, Castile Place, Valletta on Wednesday, May 5.

- 13-5-76 A special machine stamp-cancelling slogan, reading "17 TA' MEJJU — JUM DINJI TAT-TELEKOMUNIKAZZJONI" (May 17, World Telecommunications Day) was used at the Central Mail Room, Castile Place, Valletta on working days from May 13 to 17.
- 20-5-76 Thursday, May 20 was the first of a two-day Auction of Malta stamps, by Stanley Gibbons. This auction fetched a total of £81,924. It is believed to be the highest total ever realised for a single auction of Maltese Philatelic material. There were 721 Lots in all, dating from 1600 to 1969. Top price of the sale was £1,800, paid for an unused block of four, of Malta's first stamp, the ½d Buff. Less than six such blocks of this stamp are known to exist.
- 21-5-76 A Branch Post Office was opened at Żabbar on Friday, May 21. Mail is post-marked by a date-stamp inscribed "ZABBAR — MALTA". Three "postage-paid" hand date-stamps of 5m, 1c and 2c denominations were also used at this Branch Post Office from the same date.
- 1-6-76 A new metal hand date-stamp inscribed with the words "St. Paul's Bay S.P.O. — Malta" was used at the St. Paul's Bay Sub-Post Office as from Tuesday, June 1. The previous rubber hand date-stamp was withdrawn at the close of business on Monday, May 31.
- 3-6-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading "JUM DINJI/TA' L-AMBJENT/5 TA' GUNJU" (World Environment Day, June 5) was used at the Central Mail Room, Castile Place, Valletta, from June 3-5.
- 25-6-76 A special hand-stamp cancellation, commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Philatelic Society of Malta was used at the G.P.O. Valletta on Friday, June 25. (Fig. a).
- 1-7-76 A Post Office was opened on Thursday, July 1, at the XX International Trade Fair, Naxxar. A special hand-stamp cancellation, commemorating the event was used from July 1 to July 15. (Fig. e).
- 15-7-76 On the occasion of the first "Air Malta" Flight, Malta-Tunis on Thursday, July 15, the Malta Post Office used a special hand postmark indicating the date of the first flight and place of destination. The postmark was used at the Philatelic Bureau, Auberge d'Italie, Merchants Street, Valletta. (Fig. c).
- 2-8-76 A newly-designed stamp cancelling slogan, worded "IBZA' GHALL-ILMA" (Save Water), came into use on local and incoming letters at the Central Mail Room, as from Monday, August 2.
- 9-8-76 Two "postage paid" machine stamps of the 5c and 7c denominations were introduced at the Central Mail Room of the Department of Posts, Castile Place, Valletta, as from today Monday, August 9. Both machine stamps are inscribed with the words "VALLETTA/MALTA — PAID" and the respective denomination and date.
- 13-8-76 A special hand post-mark with the words "PARLAMENT FIS-SALA LGDIDA — MALTA" surrounding the emblem of Malta, the date "13-8-76", and the word "VALLETTA", was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail, at the General Post Office, on Friday, August 13, between 7.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. The post-mark marked the occasion of the first sitting of Parliament in the new Chamber (Fig. b).

- 23-8-76 The Branch Post Office at Prince of Wales Road, Sliema, was transferred to the Government School, Isouard Street, corner with Depiro Street, Sliema, as from Monday, August 23, until repairs at the Prince of Wales Road premises are completed. All postal facilities continued to be given at the temporary office. The letter box at the Prince of Wales Post Office continued to be used.
- 23-8-76 A new hand-stamp inscribed with the words "POSTAGE PAID — 3c — MALTA" was used at the Central Mail Room of the General Post Office from Monday, August 23.
- 28-8-76 A Branch Post Office was set up at the Grand Hotel Verdala, Rabat during the VI World Congress of Lasallian Federations between Saturday, August 28 and Tuesday, August 31.* The post office dealt with the sale of stamps and postal stationery, the registration of letters, the issue and payment of money and postal orders and the posting of parcels, between 8.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Postal articles posted at the Congress were postmarked with a date-stamp with the words, "VI KUNGRESS MONDJALI TAL-FEDERAZZJONIJIET LASALLJANI/MALTA" (Fig. g).
- 28-8-76 The Malta Post Office participated in the 28th. International Stamp Fair at Riccione, San Marino, between August 28 and 30. A limited number of commemorative covers were prepared, and sold at 3c each from the General Post Office. A special hand-postmark was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail at the Counter Hall of the G.P.O. during the period August 28 to 30. The postmark was inscribed with the words, "XXVIII INTERNATIONAL STAMP FAIR — RICCIONE — MALTA POST OFFICE". Identical postmarks were used at Riccione during the same period. (Fig. d).
- 1-9-76 A Sub-Post Office was opened at "Monarch", Church Square, Birżebbuġa, as from Wednesday, September 1st. A hand metal-stamp inscribed with the words "BIRZEB-BUĠA S.P.O. MALTA" was used at this Sub-Post Office.
- 6-9-76 A Branch Post Office was set up at the Corinthia Palace Hotel, during the Vth. European Poultry Conference between Monday, September 6 and Friday, September 10. The post office dealt with the sale of stamps and postal stationery, the registration of letters, the issue and payment of money and postal orders and the posting of parcels, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. except Wednesday, September 8. On Wednesday the post office was open between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Postal articles posted at the Conference were postmarked with a date-stamp having the words, "V EUROPEAN POULTRY CONFERENCE — MALTA" (Fig. f).
- 8-10-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading, "U.N. POSTAL ADMINISTRATION 25th. ANNIVERSARY 8-10-76" was used at the Central Mail Room, Castille Place, Valletta.
- 9-10-76 A special hand postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail at the General Post Office, Valletta from 8 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. This was to commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the Hobbies Society. The special hand postmark was inscribed with the words, "X ANNIVERSARY — HOBBIES SOCIETY 1966 — 1976, 9-X.76, VALLETTA — MALTA" (Fig. h).

- 14-10-76 The Malta Postal Administration participated in the Official Class of the World Stamp Exhibition ITALIA '76 which was held in Milan from October 14 to 24, 1976. ITALIA '76 was held under the patronage of the Federation Internationale de Philatelie.
- 23-10-76 The Malta Post Office participated for the second year running in the Third Annual Washington International Lions Stamp Show held in Washington, U.S.A. from the 23rd. to 25th. October, 1976. A special hand postmark was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail at the Counter Hall of the G.P.O. during the period 23rd. to 25th. October, 1976. The postmark was inscribed with the words, "INTERNATIONAL LIONS STAMP SHOW, WASHINGTON D.C. WILSHOW 111 — MALTA POST OFFICE." Identical postmarks were used at WILSHOW 111 during the same period. Commemorative covers at three cents each were sold from the G.P.O. as from the 19th October, 1976. A limited number of special covers each bearing one U.S. stamp and one Malta stamp, each cancelled with an appropriate postmark of the respective Postal Administration were also on sale at twenty cents each. (Fig. j and k).
- 23-10-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded, "JOINT ARAB CHAMBERS/OF COMMERCE CONFERENCE/MALTA 1976" was used at the Central Mail Room, Castille Place, Valletta, on the 23rd. and 25th. October, 1976.
- 4-11-76 A special hand postmark with the words, "1946 — 1976 UNESCO MALTA" was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail on the counter at the General Post Office, Valletta, on November 4 from 8 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. It marked the 30th. anniversary of UNESCO. (Fig. i).
- 15-11-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded, "GIMGHA NAZZJONALI TAL-KTIEB, 15-21 NOV. '76" was used at the Central Mail Room, Castille Place, Valletta, on the 15th November, 1976.
- 17-11-76 A temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the Grand Hotel Verdala, Rabat, during the holding of the Malta Lions Europa Forum from the 17th to the 20th November 1976. A special commemorative cover was printed by the Department of Posts. These covers were on sale at 3 cents each from the G.P.O. Valletta as from the 15th November, 1976 and from the Verdala temporary branch from the 17th to the 20th November, 1976. The Branch Post Office was opened from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and from 8.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Satu day. The B.P.O. was open for the sale of stamps and postal stationery, registration of letters, issue and payment of Money and Postal Orders and posting of parcels.
A date-stamp, inscribed "LIONS INTERNATIONAL EUROPA FORUM, MALTA 1976" was used to postmark all postal articles posted at this B.P.O. (Fig. l).
- 18-11-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded "IL-POSTA TAQLEB GĦAS-SISTEMA METRIKA, 1 ta' JANNAR 1977" started being used at the Central Mail Room, Valletta as from Thursday, 18th November 1976.
- 22-11-76 A Sub-Post Office was opened at 21/1, Wilga Street, Paceville, on 22nd November, 1976. A hand metal date-stamp inscribed with the words "ST. JULIAN'S S.P.O. — MALTA", was used at this Sub-Post Office.

- 27-11-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded, "JUM TA' TFADDIL NAZZJONALI — IT-TFADDIL DMIR TAC-CITTADIN — 30 NOVEMBRU 1976" was used at the Central Mail Room, Castille Place Valletta, on the 27th, 29th and 30th November 1976.
- 29-11-76 A "postage paid" machine stamp of the 3 cents denomination was available at the Central Mail Room, Castille Place, Valletta as from Monday, the 29th November, 1976. The "postage paid" machine stamp is inscribed with the words, "VALLETTA MALTA — 3c — PAID" and the date.
- 6-12-76 A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded, "GHINU T-TFAL FIL-BZONN UZAW BOLLI TAL-MILIED" was used at the Central Mail Room, Casille Place, Valletta from the 6th December 1976.
- 17-12-76 In the Government Gazette of the 17th December 1976 it was stated that the 5 cents stamp of the First Decimal Definitive Postage Set had been reprinted again by Printex Limited, Malta and was for sale from the Philatelic Bureau.
- 17-12-76 The Post Master General notified that two "postage-paid" machine stamps were available at the Post Offices of Hamrun, Valletta, Sliema and B'kara as from Monday 20th December 1976. Each of the machine stamps is inscribed with the name of the "POST OFFICE — MALTA — PAID" and the 1 cent and 2 cents denomination.
- 21-12-76 The Postmaster General notified that due to a technical fault the "postage-paid" machine stamps which were to be available as from the 20th December 1976, at the Post Offices of Hamrun, Valletta, Sliema and B'kara, as notified in the Government Gazette of the 17th December 1976, will now be used at a later date which will be announced in due course.

Because of paper costs and due to shortage of space, small print had to be used for this article. Every effort will be made to use normal print for the 1977 diary.

A full page showing the special hand-postmarks mentioned in this diary, will be printed in the next issue of the magazine.

MALTA GIBRALTAR CYPRUS

(1937 - 1976)

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