



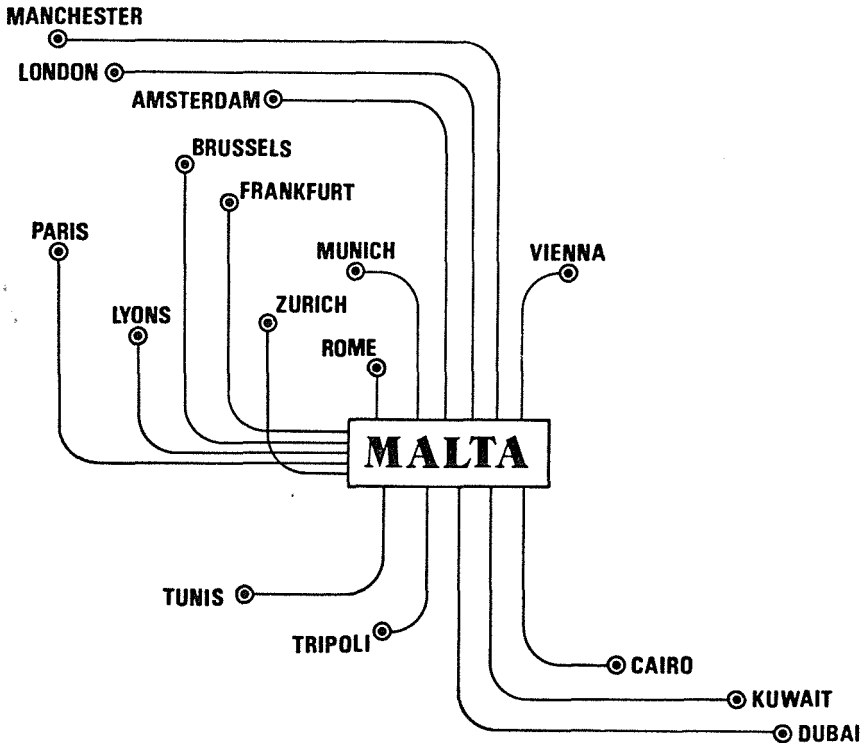
THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY

THE PSM MAGAZINE

Vol. 10 No. 2

SPRING 1980

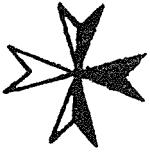
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THE PSM MAGAZINE

Bronze-Gilt Medal at VIIth Malta Philatelic Exhibition — 1977

Bronze Medals at PRAGA' 78; PHILASERDICA '79

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

VOL. 10 No. 2

SPRING 1980

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January — April 1980

Cover design Chev. Emvin Cremona

Address all correspondence

The Editor, Nick A. Cutajar
The P.S.M. Magazine
7 Wied il-Għajn Road
Żejtun, Malta.

FOREWORD

The VIII the Malta Philatelic Exhibition has recently been launched with the publication of the appropriate brochure. Organized by the Postal Administration of Malta, under the distinguished patronage of the Minister of Development, Energy, Port and Telecommunications, the exhibition will be held at the Auberge d'Italie, between December 9th-16th, 1980.

The theme of the exhibition is Sport and Games; 1980 is Olympic year and Malta will be hosting the 1980 FIDE Chess Olympiads between November 20th and December 8th, 1980. The Malta Post Office will be releasing a special commemorative set for the occasion of the Chess Olympiads, the designs of which will be selected after a public competition. 'Sports and Games' will feature prominently in the displays by various postal administrations expected to participate in the National Philatelic Exhibition.

A close examination of the classifications of exhibits, rules and awards beg a few observations and comments.

The Organizing Committee has emphasised the thematic aspect of the Exhibition by inviting Postal Administrations to submit "stamps featuring sport and games", and the design motif of the exhibition leaflet and stationery, featuring discuss throwing and chess. Thus one would expect in the competition section, a class for topical collections. Unfortunately, entries of a thematic nature are being invited only in the Juvenile section, and limiting entries in this section to collections on sport and games. Does this imply thematic collections are only suitable for young collectors? We all know that thematic collections are earnestly built up even by very serious adult collectors. And why limit entries in the Maltese Islands has not yet reached sufficient levels as to enable limitations.

Adults wishing to participate must submit collections dealing with Malta postage stamps, philatelic material and postal history. If you happen to be a philatelist studying the modern British definitives, or the classic British Q.V. postal stationery, or the turbulent East Africa, then don't try to submit an entry. You have unfortunately selected an 'overseas' country. The Organizing Committee presumably finds First Day Covers, more eligible to participate in our National Exhibition. (We are not against those collectors who cherish the collecting of first day covers, which can be attractive and at times desirable, but one hardly meets with FDC's exhibited in National Exhibitions.)

A separate class should have been incorporated catering for serious philatelists with collections of an 'overseas' country. It has been officially stated that the decision to hold the National Exhibition every three years was taken to ensure better and more exhibits. Unfortunately the authorities are making rest-

Continued on page 27

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|---|
| 364 | Mr. Carey Gouldner | P.O. Box 332, Monsey,
New York 10932, U.S.A. |
| 365. | Mr. David Ch. Koefman | 40, Spinola Court,
St. Julians, Malta. |
| 366 | Mr. Peter Buttigieg | Box 73, Middne,
Victoria 3042, Australia. |
| 367 | Mr. Alan E. Karpas | 8, Rehov Hamagal Bet Hakerem,
Jerusalem, Israel. |
| 368 | Mr. Salvu Cesare | 14, Laqxija Street,
Birkirkara, Malta. |
| 369 | Mr. John G. Mifsud | 1290, New York Drive, Concord,
California 94521, U.S.A. |
| 370 | Mr. Alfred Abela | 32, St. Pius X Street,
Żejtun, Malta. |
| 371 | Mr. Bertram Snook | 32, Holloway Bath, Avon, U.K. |
| 372 | Mr. Alex Deason | 38, Preston Wy Balga 6061,
Western Australia, Australia. |
| 373 | Miss Jane Vella | 437, Fler de Lys Road,
Birkirkara, Malta. |
| 374 | Mr. Oreste Vella | 428, McLaughlin Square,
50 Richmond Street,
East Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. |
| 375 | Mr. Frederic John Pritchard | 364, Highters Heath Lane, Hollywood,
Birmingham B14 LTE, U.K. |
| 376 | Mr. Mohammed Ali Siala | P.O. Box 2411, Tripoli, Libya. |
| 377 | Mr. Abdallah Ali Siala | P.O. Box17, Hamrun, Malta. |

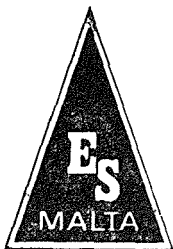
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- Attract new members.
- Participate in the Auctions and Exchange Packet Branch.

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THE MALTA STAMP ALBUM

FINE ARTS ON MALTA STAMPS

Part III

by LOIS L. CORBIN

(Editorial Note: All the following subjects refer to the 1965-1970 'Historical' Issue).

SCOTT

SAID

- 312 *Neolithic Sculpture of Sleeping Woman*, 5' long statuette of c. 1600 BC, known as "The Sleeping Lady", found in the Hypogeum at Ħal Saffieni, now in the National Museum, Valletta. Hypogeum discovered in 1902. Statuette, arms folded, is lying on wooden framed couch covered with reeds, has thickly stuffed pillow beneath head. Screen in background is finely carved on stone and originally coloured. Detail from interior of megalithic temple and shows a symmetrical composition of four spirals arranged in double oculus pattern; spirals in red ochre said to be feature of pre-historic religious art. ½d stamp. 310

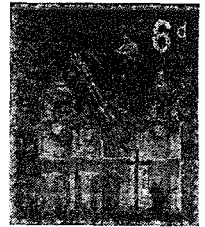
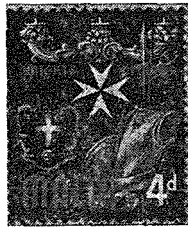


- 313 *Cippus, Phoenician and Greek Inscriptions*. Votive 'cippus' (memorial pillar) of marble with bilingual inscriptions cut on the base, now in the National Museum, Valletta. Found in 17th century on the site of a temple of Melkart (Moloch), the god Hercules of Phoenicia, at Tas-Silġ, above Marsaxlokk. Similar pillar presented to Louis XIV of France by Grand Master De Redin, now in Louvre. Important because of parallel inscriptions in Phoenician and Greek on base; basis for reconstructing the Phoenician alphabet in same manner as Rosette Stone offered the key to the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt. It was dedicated by the brothers Abdosir and Osirxamar (Dionysius and Serapion in the Greek). 1d stamp. 311
- 315 *Lamp, Roman Temple: Proto-Christian*. Features characteristic protochristian terracotta lamp bearing the monogram of Christ. An old ecclesiastical structure and an "alpha" topped by a cross 313

are shown on the lower portion of stamp. St. Luke, companion to Saint Paul in his travels, relates how the Apostle Paul with 275 men of the crew were honoured during the 3 months of their stay on Malta after their shipwreck. St. Paul preached the new faith and healed various people, including the father of Publius (the 'Protos' of the Island), afterwards consecrated first Bishop of Malta. 2d stamp.

- 316 *Stele: Saracen, 12th century in memory of Majmuna died 1174 AD*, carved on a fragment of Roman entablature. The contents of the inscription tell us that this was the tomb of Majmuna who "God's mercy be upon her" died "testifying that there is no other God but God alone who has no equal". One of few remains of period. The highly artistic sculptured lettering justifies its inclusion. 2½d stamp. 314

- 317 *Siculo-Norman Arch, Palazzo Gatto-Murino, Notabile; the Siculo-Norman window is that of the Palazzo Gatto-Murino at Notabile (Malta). After the surrender of Syracuse in 1091 both Sicily and Malta became integral parts of the Sicilian Realm, with Maltese responsible for local government. The capital, the Roman Melita, called "Mdina" by the Arabs, was entitled "Notabile" by King Alfonso in 1427, or by the Università (local council) in honour of Chales V at a later date. 3d stamp.* 315

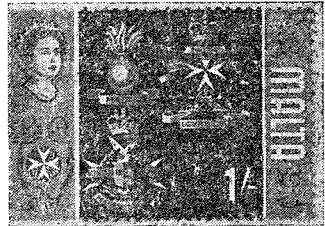
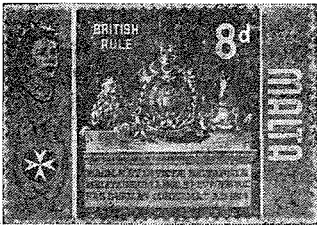


- 318 *Lamp, Base, Cross, Armour: Knights of Malta.* Stamp reproduces characteristic support of a triple lantern of the stern of a galley (see also 4½d value), the white 8-pointed Maltese Cross and the coat-of-arms of the Order of St. John, together with a breast-plate and other pieces of 16th Century armour. Malta was transferred by Charles V as fief to the Order in 1530. In 1798 the Island was captured by Napoleon and the rule of Knights was ended. 4d stamp. 316

- 319A *Fortifications.* 5d stamp. 318

320 *Cathedral of Mdina: French Occupation. Emblems of the French Republic, the "fasces" and the Frisian Cap, which were placed on the Cathedral of Mdina (Notabile) in 1798. Original wooden oval painted ensign with French Republic's emblem which was actually hoisted on the facade of the Cathedral is still preserved in the Church (St. Paul's Cathedral) Museum at Mdina. 6d stamp.* 319

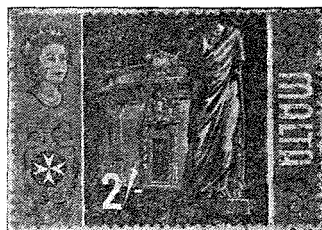
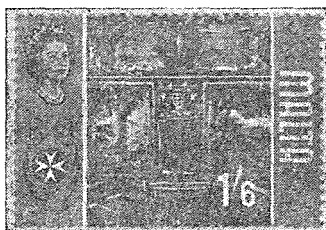
321 *British Arms, Armoury, Valletta. Coat-of-Arms of Great Britain surrounding a Latin inscription recording the British Sovereignty over the Islands, which was placed over the main entrance of the Main Guard in the Palace Square. A single story building with Doric columns which faces the Square, built by the Maltese, occupying the SW side of the Square and the corner of the Kingsway was the Treasury of the Order. It is now the Casino Maltese. 8d stamp.* 320



321 *Naval Arsenal. 10d stamp.* 321

322 *British Army Insignia: Crests of two major Maltese Units of the British Army, and the Grenade symbolizes the Malta Fortress Squadron, Royal Engineers. The Auberge de Castille at Leon, Castille Palace, now houses the military headquarters. 1/- stamp.* 322

324 *Knights of Malta Hall: Self-Government 1921; now assembly seat. Palace of the Grand Masters, completed in 1574 on the main square; its Council Chamber and Hall of St. Michael and St. George complete with one another in sheer magnificence. Girolomo Cassar was the architect here. Hall here represented now used for sittings of the Malta Legislative Assembly. Coffered ceiling of the Hall made of highly decorated wooden rafters; frieze running around its four sides painted with scenes showing 17th century naval victories of the Knights. On the walls 10 large Govelin tapestries, reproducing paintings by F. Desportes (?), donated by Grand Master Ramon Perellos, representing scenes of tropical hunting and jungle life. The Speaker's seat, just under the Crucifix, is placed where once stood the Grand Master's throne. 1/6 stamp.* 324



- 325 *Statue of Livia*: Civic Council, Gozo; in Gozo City Hall. On It-Tokk Square, Grand Master de Vilhena built the ornate bow-fronted building to the east of the square. It housed the municipal or governing body of the island, the "Banca Giuratale", the seat of the **Gozitan Commune** where the "Giurati" assembled. It dates from 1733 and has some 19th century additions. The draped mutilated statue now in the Gozo Museum is held to be Livia, daughter of Drusus and wife of the Emperor Augustus. An inscription on the base of a statue of Livia, erected after the death of the Emperor, explains that the statue was offered by Lutezia, her priestess. The base is also preserved in the Gozo Museum. 2/- stamp. 325
- 326 *Seated Woman and George Cross*: State of Malta. The symbolic figure of Malta holding a weapon firmly in both hands. Fragment of a classical fluted column at her feet indicates her glorious past: her arm rests on the traditional red and white coat-of-arms, to which has been added the George Cross. On the upper left is the Mural Crown that heradry assigns to cities and countries that have distinguished themselves at war. 2/6 stamp. 326
- 327 *Symbols of Independence*: *doves, U.N. emblem, British Crown and Pope's tiara*. Malta became independent on 21st September 1964. 3/- stamp. 327
- 328 *"HAFMED"*: *headquarters and Insigne* of the Allied Forces Mediterranean. Headquarters building, located in Floriana, taken over by NATO in 1953. Original HAFMED Staff first occupants of the building, designed as a block of flats. Crest of Allied Forces Mediterranean shows the Mediterranean with an eagle on top (symbol of Air power) and an anchor below (symbol of Sea power). 5/- stamp. 328
- 330 *Statues of St. Paul, St. Publius, St. Agatha*: Catholicism. Stamp portrays the establishment of Catholicism on the Islands, the 3 saints being patrons of Malta. According to Chev. Cremona, there are no statues that are comparable to these designs in Malta. The designs are the creation of Cremona. £1 stamp. 330

THE TRADE FAIRS

Part I

by

By ANTHONY FENECH

History

The International Fair of Malta originated in 1949, with an Exhibition of Maltese Goods and Products organised by the Malta Chamber of Commerce, held in the Courtyard of The Exchange Buildings, Valletta, on the occasion of the visit of Her Royal Highness, the Princess Elizabeth, now Queen Elizabeth II, to Malta. On the initiative of the General Retailers and Traders Union, the First Trade Fair was held between the 2nd and 5th October, 1952, in San Anton Gardens. The Second and Third Trade Fairs were also held in San Anton Gardens in 1953 and 1955. The organisation of such Fairs became much of a burden on the Union. Thus the responsibility, organisation and running of Trade Fairs, were transferred, in April 1955, to the Malta Trade Fair Corporation. In fact, the 1955 Trade Fair held in September was organised by this new organisation.

The Malta Trade Fair Corporation aimed at the furtherance of Maltese industry and international trade. It was soon realised that the site at San Anton Gardens had become too small. It took the Corporation almost five years to find a suitable location. However, during this period, a Trade and Industry Exhibition (Expo 59) was held at The Empire Stadium, Gżira, in July and August 1959, and a Trade and Industry Festival was organised by The Nuns of St. Joseph at Blata l-Bajda from the 3rd to the 13th September 1959.

With the cooperation of a public-spirited gentleman, the late Marquis John Scicluna, the fourth edition of the Malta Trade Fair opened, in 1960, in the gardens adjoining Palazzo Parisio, Naxxar. Since then, the Fair has become a very popular event in the Maltese Calendar.

In October 1967, the Malta Trade Fair was accorded international status. The 34th Congress of the Union des Foires Internationales, meeting at Vienna, accepted it as a full and active member of the Union. In 1971, the Malta Trade Fair Corporation was host to the 38th Congress of the Union, which was held at the Grand Hotel Verdala. Another important event was the holding of the First Council Meeting of the Association of Fairs Organisations in Third World Countries. This First Council Meeting was held in February, 1977, at the Corinthia Palace Hotel.

The Malta International Fair, as it is now called, attracts thousands of visitors to the Trade Fair each year, amongst whom is a considerable number from overseas.

From time to time the General Post Office has advertised these Trade Fairs by means of slogans which may be summarised as follows:

ADVERTISING SLOGANS

	Advertising Slogan	Date
1.	VISIT TRADE AND INDUSTRY — EXHIBITION — EMPIRE STADIUM 18th JULY — 2nd AUGUST	13th June — 2nd August 1959
2.	VISIT/2nd TRADE AND INDUSTRY/ FESTIVAL/ BLATA L-BAJDA 3rd — 13th SEPTEMBER 1959	3rd to 13th September 1959
3.	MALTA/FOURTH TRADE FAIR/ 30th JUNE — 10th JULY 1960 A Mediterranean/SHOW WINDOW/WORTH VISITING	2nd March 1960 — 10th July 1960
4.	EXHIBIT — VISIT/THE MALTA/TRADE FAIR	10th — 30th June 1961 7th March — 2nd July 1962 15th June — 9th July 1963 5th — 10th July 1972

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE POSTMARKS

1. British Empire Exhibition 1924



30mm circular handstamp used on Mail, in Malta, on the occasion of the preliminary showing of the Wembley Empire Exhibition Exhibits in 1924.

In fact 2 handstamps were used on local mail; the two handstamps differ in three clearly visible respects:

- (i) One has the two bars under the lion much closer — $\frac{1}{2}$ mm instead of 1mm;
- (ii) the vertical and horizontal of the "4" are at right angles;
- (iii) the dot is nearer the mid-point between "E" and "4".

2. XIX Centenary of St. Paul's Shipwreck Commemorative Cancellation
30th June — 11th July 1960
33mm circular handstamp with time and date slugs used in conjunction with the 27mm double ring with arcs as spacers Malta Trade Fair Post Office (without time), elsewhere on the front of the Cover.
3. International Fairs Union
38 Congress
20/22 Oct 1971
A Sub Post Office (a Temporary One) was opened in the Grand Hotel, Verdala where the 38th Congress of The International Fairs Union was held between the 20th and 22nd October 1971.
4. Europa '75
L-Ewwel Jum tal-Ħruġ 17-7-1975
Fiera Internazzjonali
Naxxar — Malta
Cept Emblem
31.5mm rubber handstamp used on the last day of the 1975 Fair to cancel First Day Covers and other Covers franked with the newly issued stamps (Europa '75).
5. Europa '76
L-Ewwel Jum tal-Ħruġ
8.VII.76
Fiera Internazzjonali
Naxxar — Malta
Cept Emblem
An oblong with rounded corners type of rubber handstamp used to cancel First Day Covers posted at the International Fair on the 8th July, being the first day of issue of the 1976 Europa stamps.
6. Europa '77
L-Ewwel Jum tal-Ħruġ
5-VII-77
Fiera Internazzjonali Naxxar
Cept Emblem
MALTA with arcs
A 28.5mm circular rubber handstamp cancelled First Day Covers and all other philatelic material franked with the Europa 1977 stamps on the first day (5-7-77) only.

TRADE FAIR STAMP ISSUES

1. 1966 — 16th June on the occasion of the X Malta Trade Fair.
Designer: Chev. E.V. Cremona.
Printers: Thomas de la Rue and Co. Ltd. (The machine used to print these stamps was a "Palatia" Model O Single Colour plate manufactured by Albert Und Cia of Frankenthal, Germany. The press has an output from 1500 to 2000 sheets per hour).

Process: Photogravure.

Paper: Maltese Cross Watermark. Perforation: 13 by 13.5 comb.

Stamps per Sheet: 60 (29mm by 29mm square). Gum: Arabic.

Design: Impressionist design symbolising The Trade Fair.

Denominations and Colours: 2d (Pale lilac, ultramarine, light brown, black and gold);

8d (light-grey, reddish violet, purple, black and gold);

2/6d (light drab, vermilion, grey, black and gold).

Pane make up: Twelve rows of five stamps.

Plate Numbers 1A1A1A1A1A and 1B1B1B1B1B on all values.

Marginal Markings: 3mm square and 2mm circle on 1A plate; Registration crosses 1A, 1B plates.

Varieties: 2d Pane 1A Row 7 No. 5 — Colour weakness under "Fair";
Pane 1B Row 10 No. 1 — White dot on upright of "t" of "Malta".

8d Pane 1B Row 12 No. 2 — Background retouch at top left design.

2/6d Pane 1B Row 8 No. 1 — Large retouch on grey motif.

Quantities sold: 2d — 752,750; 8d — 188,705; 2/6d — 166,907.

This Issue was placed on sale two weeks before the Fair opened, but the Post Offices in Malta and Gozo sold out of the 2/6d value on the date of issue (Thursday 16th June) and of the 8d on Saturday 19th June. It was reported in "The Sunday Times of Malta" of that week that a spokesman from the G.P.O. confirmed reports that an Italian-backed syndicate bought as much of the Post Offices' Counter stocks and the G.P.O. reserve stock as possible. The Crown Agents' sales of this set in London were also higher than would be expected for such an Issue. That same week dealers in Malta were asking about five times the face value, and in Rome eight times as much.

There must have been few used copies of the 8d or 2/6d with appropriate dates, a few First Day Covers and exceedingly few 8d and 2/6d stamps on mail from the Trade Fair Post Office.

The Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 17 of the Post Office Act soon made rules relating to sales of postage stamps taking effect from 16th September 1966, thus permitting the Postmaster General to:

- "require demands for abnormal quantities of stamps to be made in writing";
- "reserve commemorative postage stamps for the normal demands of customers before meeting demands for abnormal quantities";
- "determine the maximum quantity of each denomination of commemorative postage stamps which may be sold to any one person at

any one time”;

— “supply reduced quantities against abnormal demands.”

Some philatelists were disappointed; in fact a letter had appeared in “The Times of Malta” asking the Post Office whether they could arrange a reprint of the stamps so that they could be kept in circulation until the Fair came to an end. It is worth noting that a few local dealers persisted in franking their commercial covers with the 2d value of this set until The International Fair of 1973.

2. **g668 — 1st June — XII International Trade Fair.**



Designer: Chev. E.V. Cremona.

Printers: Harrison and Sons (The Printer's name appears across the bottom selvage in black capital letters 3mm high).

Process: Photogravure.

Paper: Maltese Cross watermark (sideways).

Gum: P.V.A.

Perforation: 14 by 14.5 (comb). Dimensions: 24.3 x 30mm.

Stamps per Sheet: 60 (10 rows x 6).

Denominations and Colours: Common — black, brown, yellow, orange and **grey**;

4d only — black; 8d only — turquoise; 3/- only — mauve.

Plate Numbers: 1A1A1A1A1A1A and 1B1B1B1B1B1B for all values.

Varieties: All apply to the three values:

- 1A — Row 4 No. 4 Dot in spoke of wheel at top right hand corner.
- Row 5 No. 1 Bulge at top of “L” in white “MALTA”.
- Row 5 No. 1 Broken line to right of Maltese Cross.
- Row 5 No. 1 Deformed base of “T” in “TRADE”.
- Row 7 No. 3 Grey smudge, shaped like a bracket on sign above value.
- Row 8 No. 1 Weak entry between “A” and “L” of white “MALTA”.
- Row 8 No. 3 A dark retouch to nose, mouth and chin of face in the top right-hand corner.
- 1B — Row 3 No. 2 Retouch or weak entry at base of green figure left centre.
- Row 4 No. 4 Break in colour below “A” in white “MALTA”.
- Row 4 No. 6 Weak entry below 2nd “A” in white “MALTA”.
- Row 6 No. 2 Black spot in white “M” of “MALTA”.
- Row 6 No. 3 White spot in left centre.
- Row 7 No. 2 Black dot in first “A” of white “MALTA”.

New from Robson Lowe Ltd.

1576 MALTA 1960

POSTAL HISTORY AND POSTAGE STAMPS

For fifteen years the Malta Study Circle has been assembling the text for this book. For several reasons the postal history and postage stamps of Malta have been one of the most popular studies with collectors, yet until this volume was published there was no standard work for the specialist in Malta.

The individual chapters have each been collated by a specialist in the subject and all the latest discoveries have been included. The reputation of the Malta Study Circle for producing Study Papers with careful scholarship and clear representation of all the facts is renowned.

Perforce this is a limited edition and apparently an expensive work represents many thousands hours of labour by a number of devoted students voluntarily compiling this splendid volume for your pleasure and joy in this attractive hobby.

Published in May 1980 for the Malta Study Circle. 432 pages, 464 line, 220 half tone and 24 colour illustrations. Price £25 + £1 p&p.



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THE FORT RICASOLI MUTINY

Following the publication of the letter detailing the Mutiny on Fort Ricasoli in 1807, two members wrote putting forward their opinions regarding the explanation of the postal rates on the entire. Correspondence is reproduced hereunder. We also reproduce the entire showing postal manuscript rates as well as an engraving of Fort Ricasoli.

From George Coates, Rickmansworth, Herts, England.

"I have just received my copy of the P.S.M. Magazine for Winter 1980 and much enjoyed reading the 1807 letter from Malta.

I applaud your initiative in attempting to sort out the charge marks on the cover. I believe that I may be able to help. The letter I have taken to weigh two ounces and if sent as a "Ship Letter" would as you say have been charged $2/8$ plus the Captain's Gratuity (which in fact appears to have been $2d$ at this date). However Royal Naval Captains did not usually claim the "pence" — this one seems for some reason to have claimed $1d$ only — I don't know why.

The letter would have been landed at Portsmouth, where the Ship Letter mark was struck. It would then have been sent to London (72 miles) at $28d$ per oz. = $4/8d$... this is possibly the mark you note as $4/3d$, these figures are so often difficult to decipher. Next from London to Edinburgh (396 miles) when the charge was $8/8d$.

For some reason the $2/9d$ and $8/8$ have been added to give a sub-total of $11/5d$, in fact the total charge was $16/1d$. This seemingly high rate was not unusual for heavy letters such as this.

Had the writer sent his two ounce letter by packet (which as you know operated from 1806) the cost would have been: Malta to London = $26/-$ plus London to Edinburgh = $8/8$, a total of no less than $34/8d$!

Isay the letter travelled from Portsmouth to London as there was as far as I know, no mail coach route from Falmouth to Edinburgh.

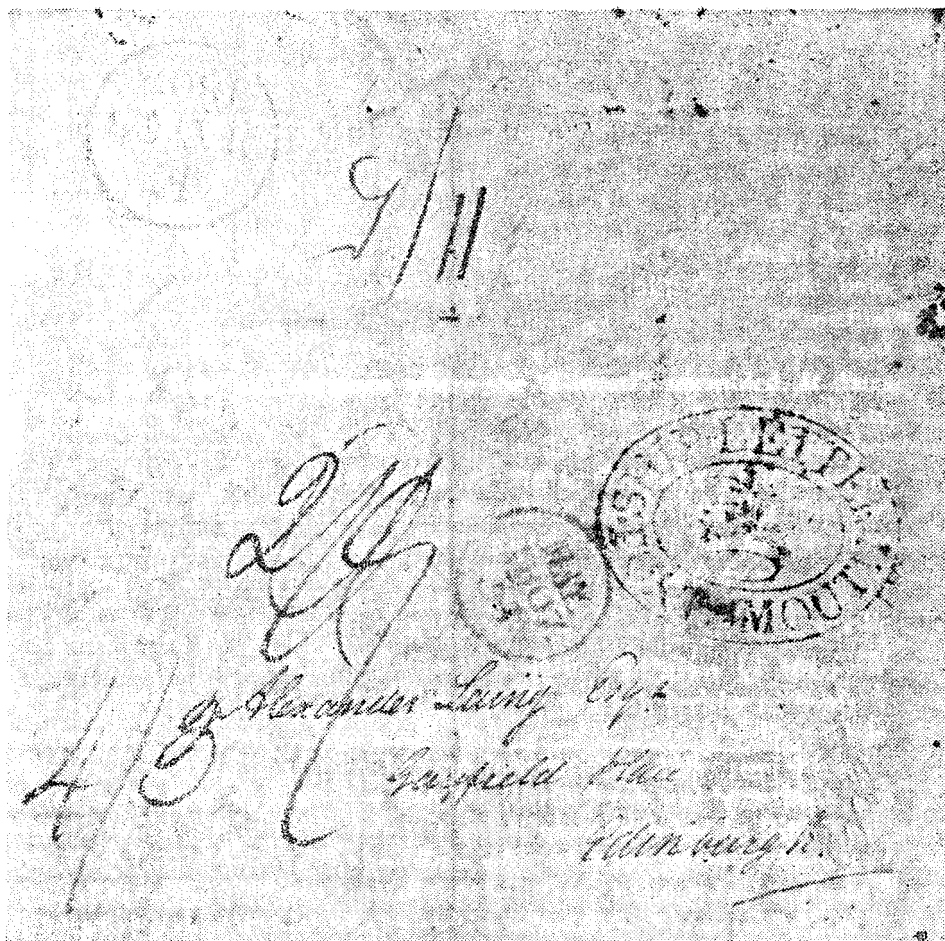
The rates that you mention on page 14 are in fact for a single rate letter whereas yours is x 8.

I do hope that all this is of some interest! — in my case I have enjoyed trying to work it out."

From John Birkett Allan, Bristol, England

I can explain at least the $2/9d$ and $11/5d$ charges. Dr. Bonnici correctly explains the $2/9d$ for a Ship Letter — 2 ounces at $1/4d$ per ounce = $2/8d$ plus Captains Gratuity of $1d$ gives $2/9d$.

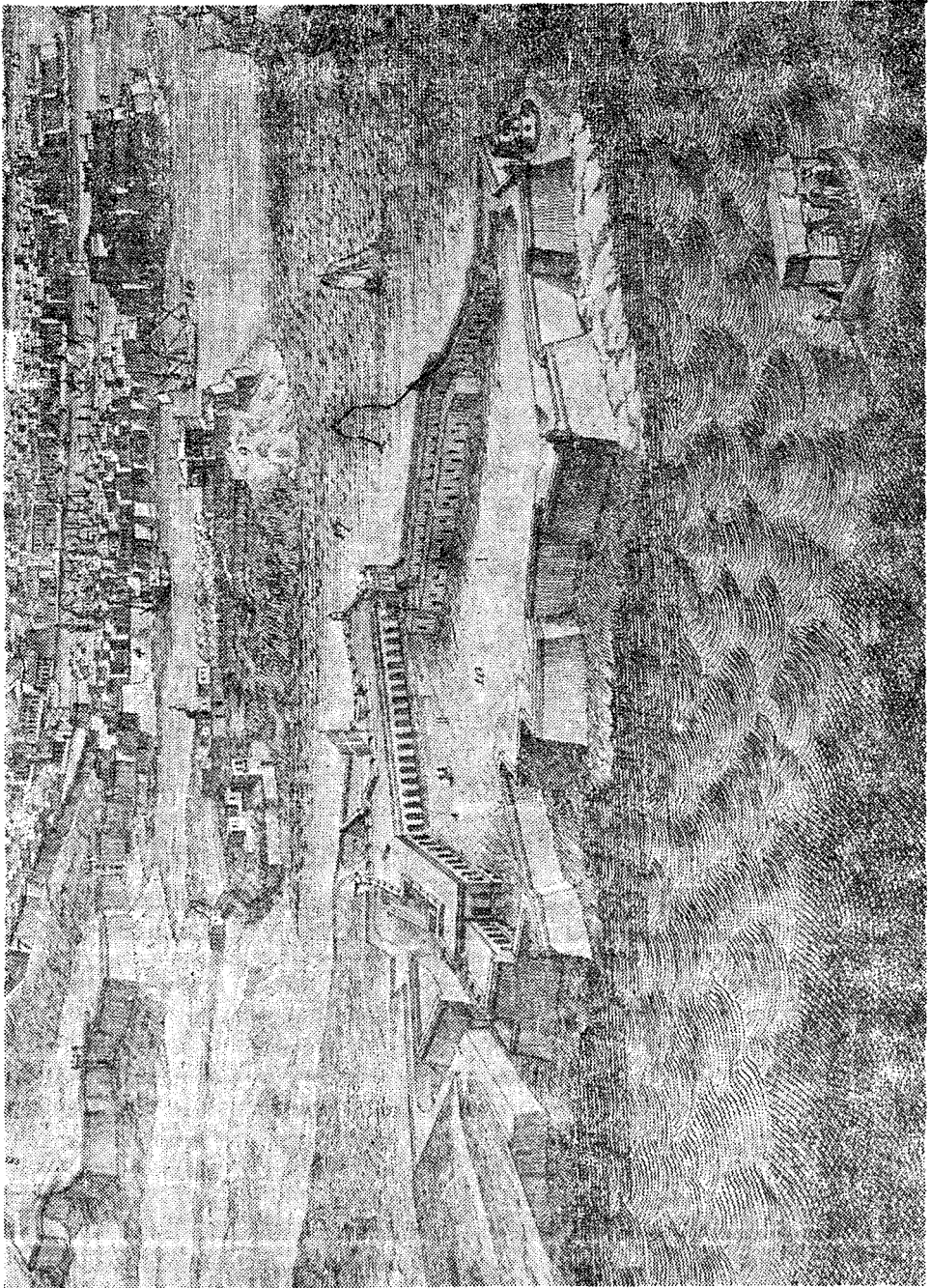
The $11/5d$ represents the total charge for the letter — postal rates were



extremely high in the early part of the nineteenth century. Portsmouth to Edinburgh was between 400 and 500 miles, the rates for which was increased in 1805 to 1/1d for a single letter. An ounce was charged quadruple rate, therefore 2 ounces = 1/1d x 8 = 8/8d. Add this to the 2/9d ship letter charge to give 11/5d total charge for the letter. I cannot explain the 4/3d, but may be able to do so if I could see this letter.

The "F/May 28/1807" datestamp was applied at London, not at Falmouth. The "F" merely is a code letter and does not indicate Falmouth. There would be no purpose in routing the letter south west from Portsmouth when scheduled to go north to Edinburgh (Portsmouth to London, then London to Edinburgh were main coach routes).

Hope the above comments are helpful."



THE MYSTERIOUS HANDSTAMP OF THE VAG-5f TYPE

by

CARMEL SCICLUNA BONNICI

BACKGROUND

In 1952 a new type of metal handstamps were introduced by the Malta Post Office, used in conjunction with the "TRADE FAIR — MALTA" cancellors used between October 2-5, at the Sub Post Office located in the grounds of San Anton Palace. These steel handstamps, of diameter 27mm, with arcs as spacers, are of the type commonly used in the British Possessions. The handstamps contain time, day, month and year slugs, with "VALLETTA" and "MALTA" arched in between the double rings, code-named by the Malta Study Circle as the "VAG — 5" series.

USE AT VALLETTA G.P.O.

The VAG-5 series of handstamps first appeared for normal use in 1957. Ten such handstamps were recorded in use in the late 1950's, nine of which were introduced during 1957. On the 1st December 1957, a further twelve handstamps were put into use. 6 on counter duties, 4 at the Sorting Room and 2 at the Philatelic Bureau. A further two each were employed at the Parcel Office and at the Valletta B.P.O. respectively. One of these handstamps, reference VAG-5f is rather elusive and we have nicknamed it "The Mysterious Handstamp".

THE HANDSTAMP VAG-5f

An examination of 342 covers and 242 used stamps, all showing clear full strikes of the VAG-5 series of handstamps and covering the period 1957 to 1977 yielded no examples of this particular handstamp. We have investigated also the time codes on these handstamps and compared them with the recorded official closing of mails.



DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

- length of right 'arc' = 15mm;
 - length of left 'arc' = 14.5mm;
- (Note: both lengths are the longest of all the handstamps in the series).
- the distance between the left top vertex of "M" and the vertex of "A" of "MALTA" is the shortest in the whole series, at 9.75mm;
 - the distance between "L" and "T" OF "MALTA" is the shortest of the series at 2.5mm.

USE AT THE PHILATELIC BUREAU

The first day of use of this handstamp at the Philatelic Bureau is uncertain but the first recorded official use is 3 April 1977 on covers carried on the first Air Malta flight Malta-Zurich. Although two new VAG-5 handstamps were introduced at the Philatelic Bureau on the 1st December 1977, with clearly distinguishing

features, namely code letters "A" and "B" respectively instead of the time code, the handstamp VAG-5f remained in use at the Philatelic Bureau up to mid-September 1978 when it was used to replace the handstamp of the type VAG-33 (characterised by Maltese Crosses as spacers) at the Delivery Branch in the Mail Room.

With the transfer of VAG-5f to the Mail Room, VAG-33a was transferred back to the Valletta Postmen Mustering Room using the "7.30 AM" time-code.

USE AT THE DELIVERY REGISTERED LETTER BRANCHES

The VAG-5f handstamps, which we have termed "mysterious" began its employment at the Government Repository from mid-September 1978 (near the Delivery entrance) and sometime between the 3 and 5 April 1979 it started to be used at the Registered Letter Branch at the G.P.O., Valletta, without the time-code.

It can easily be identified by the fact that during its use at the Philatelic Bureau, the Government Repository and finally at the Registered Letter Branch, it can be seen with the day slug preceding the month slug. When the VAG-5f was finally transferred to the Registered Branch it was replaced with another handstamp of the type -5 series inscribed "VALLETTA (R.G.) — MALTA", normally used with "12 — PM" or "4 — PM" time codes.

AWARDS TO MEMBERS AT INTERNATIONALS

We are pleased to announce the following awards to Society members at this year's two International Philatelic Exhibitions. "The P.S.M. Magazine" obtained two awards.

LONDON 1980

General Competition Class

- * Dr. A. Bonnici — Vermeil with Special Prize

Malta Queen Halfpenny Yellow

Postal History Class

- * Mr. Godwin Said — Vermeil
Specialized Collection of Malta Postal History

- * Mr. George A. Coates — Silver
Malta Disinfected Mail

Literature Class

- * E. Said — Bronze
Said Stamp & Coin Catalogue 1980
- * E. Said — Diploma
Said SMOM Stamp Album
- * E. Said — Diploma
Said Stamp Album
- * N.A. Cutajar (Editor) — Diploma
The P.S.M. Magazine.

NORWEX 80

General Competition Class

- * Dr. A. Bonnici — Vermeil with Special Prize

Malta Queen Victoria Halfpenny Yellow

Postal History Class

- * Mr. Godwin Said — Vermeil
Specialized Collection of Malta Postal History

Literature Class

- * E. Said — Silver
Said Malta Stamp & Coin Catalogue
- * Mr. N.A. Cutajar (Editor) — Bronze
The P.S.M. Magazine

DETAILED INFORMATION OF NEW ISSUES

DUN GORG PRECA ISSUE

Date of Issue	12th April 1980.
Value	2C5.
Stamp Size	29mm x 38mm.
Art Designer	Raymond Pitrè.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.8 x 13.5.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalk surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colour

The colour of this stamp was produced by the two colours Black and Grey.

Designs

This is a commemorative stamp marking the centenary of the birth of Dun Gorg Preca, a priest who, for no material gain, dedicated his life to others.

He was a prolific writer of religious books and pamphlets in Maltese. Dun Gorg, as he was affectionately known by people from all walks of life, is best remembered through the Society of Christain Doctrine which he founded in 1907. This Society is locally known as M.U.S.E.U.M. (see badge of Society in bottom left hand corner of stamp). This is the second design of Maltese stamps by Raymond Pitrè.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, 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.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins and printed in black. The Printed Sheets of this stamp consisted of four Panes, A, B, C and D. Each Pane has 40 stamps made up of eight rows of five stamps. The stamp is of the vertical format.

Plate/Pane Numbers





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

2C5 = 1A x 2, 1B x 2, 1C x 2, 1D x 2.

Perforation of Margins

The top margin of Panes A, B, C and D is imperforate, whilst the left hand, right hand and bottom margins of the same Panes are fully perforated.

Parts of crosses, used as guides for cutting lines can still be seen in top margin of all Panes.

PANE	PANE	PANE	PANE
"A"	"B"	"C"	"D"
WMK.	WMK.	WMK.	WMK.
			

From a study of details given, the Printed Sheet before cutting would look as shown on left. Looking at the Printed Sheet as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, and hence why watermark is sideways in individual stamps.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last two stamps of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. By 12.45 p.m. on the first day, a total of 246,240 stamps with a total value of £M6,156 were sold at the G.P.O. and Branch Offices. This stamp will remain on sale up to Saturday, 27th December, 1980, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

EUROPA 1980 ISSUE

Date of Issue	29th April 1980.
Values	8c and 30c.
Stamp Size	43mm x 21.5mm.
Art Designer	Vincent Apap.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.3 x 13.8.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalk Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colour

The colour of these stamps was produced by using Dark Green and Brown for the 8c stamp and Dark Red and Brown for the 30c stamp.

Designs

The 1980 "Europa" stamp set, consists of two stamps, which in accordance with the subject chosen by the Conference of European Postal and Telecommunications Administrations, "Famous People", depicts two distinguished Maltese, Ruzar Briffa (8c stamp), and Mikiel Anton Vassalli (30c stamp). The profiles were modelled by the well known Maltese sculptor Vincent Apap who also designed the stamps. Ruzar Briffa (1906-1963), a poet, was by profession a physician. He specialised in dermatology, studying in London and India. He was one of the founders of the University Maltese Literature. In his verse, he expresses his love for his country, his affection for the family and his concern for suffering humanity.

Mikiel Anton Vasalli (1764-1829), was a scholar and a patriot. He was a great believer in the Maltese language and wanted the people of Malta to study their own language and use it as a means of education. He was one of the first Maltese to think of his country as a nation. Maltese historians in the past either omitted his name or made just a casual reference to him. Vassalli's full stature has now been acknowledged and he is considered as the man who unfurled the banner of Maltese freedom for the first time, paving the way to other patriots who followed in his footsteps.

This is the tenth Europa set issued by the G.P.O. and is again being printed in small Panes of ten stamps. Both values are of the horizontal format. Each Pane is divided into twelve spaces, four rows of three. The first space of the top row is used for the wording "Europa 1980", and the first space on the second row is used for the CEPT symbol plus an open book and pen in the 30c Pane and a scroll and branch in the 8c Pane. 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 top 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.

Each Printed Sheet, of each value, consisted of nine Panes of ten stamps, "A" to "I".

Plate/Pane Numbers

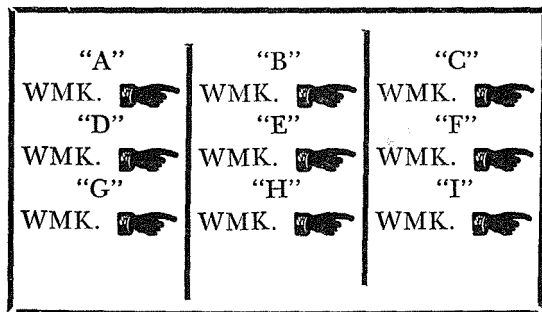
These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in each Pane of both values.

8c = 1A x 3 up to and including 11 x 3.

30c = 1A x 3 up to and including 11 x 3.

Perforation of Margins

The top margin of Panes "A", "B" and "C" of both values are imperforate, whilst 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.



The Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, would have looked as shown on left. The perforator ran from top to bottom. 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. An Imprint Block of four will not include the colour checks.

A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. It is inscribed "L-Ewwel Jum tal-~~H~~rug — Europa 1980 — Malta — 29.4.80" and the name of the respective locality. The CEPT symbol is also incorporated in the postmark.

This set will remain on sale up to Saturday, 27th December, 1980, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

This set established a new sales record. On the first day of issue, up to 12.45 p.m. sales amounted to £M372,007, which is the highest sale for one day of any stamp set. The previous record was held by the Europa set of 1978 when £M284,137 worth of stamps were sold on the first day of issue.

PRINTEX

QUALITY PRINTERS

SECURITY PRINTERS

Printex Ltd. Mill Str., Qormi, Malta

RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS ISSUE

Date of Issue	15th February 1980.
Values	2c5, 6c, 8c and 12c.
Stamp Size	2c5 and 6c — 31mm x 44mm. 8c and 12c — 44mm x 31 mm.
Art Design	Based on photography by Department of Information and Mr. J.A. Vella, F.R.P.S.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	2c5 and 6c — 14 x 13.9. 8c and 12c — 13.9 x 14.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing: Upright in the 2c5 and 6c values. Sideways in the 8c and 12c values.
Paper	Chalk Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.C.

Colour

The colour of this set was produced by the four colour process.

Designs

This set marks the inauguration of an international campaign, sponsored by UNESCO, for the restoration of monuments in Malta. The general aim of the campaign will be to restore a number of monuments in Malta and Gozo which are considered to be among the most important cultural relics of the Mediterranean region, and to strengthen the capacity of the local restoration services by the training of technical personnel.

The monuments towards which the main physical work of the campaign will be directed will be the following:

The Ħal Saffieni Hypogeum at Pawla, depicted by the 2c5 stamp, a pre-historic rock-cut temple of approximately 2500 B.C.

Vilhena Palace and Bastion, Mdina, seen on the 6c stamp, with its characteristic forecourt in the French Baroque style. It was built by Grandmaster Manuel de Vilhena (1722-1736) as his official residence in the former capital of Malta.

The Citadel of Victoria, Gozo, depicted on the 8c stamp, is the hub of all aspects of life on the Island. The archaeological investigation of its ruined areas could throw much light on Gozitan history and permit the restoration of several important monuments.

Fort St. Elmo, seen on the 12c stamp, a focal point of the ancient fortifications guarding the Grand Harbour of Malta, and the scene of several military

epicts from the middle of the 16th century to the Second World War.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter, are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes of all values.. (With this set, it is important to remind again, that a Pane of stamps is looked at in such a way, that the Plate/Pane numbers are at the left of the bottom margin, and the colour cheks are at the bottom of the right hand margin). The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right on all Panes of all values.

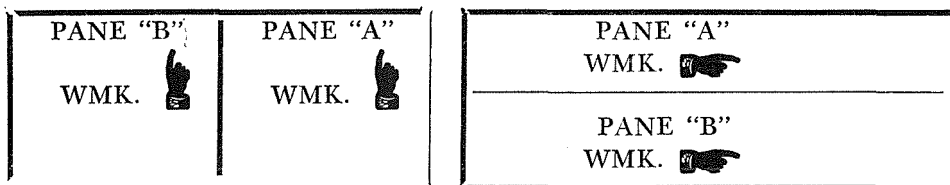
Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins of Panes. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in Black.

The Printed Sheets of all four values consisted of two Panes, "A" and "B". Each Pane has 50 stamps made up of ten rows of five stamps in the 2c5 and 6c values, and five rows of ten stamps in the 8c and 12c values. The 2c5 and 6c stamps are of the vertical format, and the 8c and 12c stamps are of the horizontal format.

Perforation of Margins

In the 2c5 and 6c values, the top, bottom and right hand margins of Panes "A" and "B" are perforated. The left hand margin of Pane "B" is also perforated, but the left hand margin of Pane "A" is imperforate.

In the 8c and 12c values, the left, right and bottom margins of Panes "A" and "B" are perforated. The top margin of Pane "B" is also perforated, but the top margin of Pane "A" is imperforate.



From a study of all the details given, the Printed Sheets, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown above left, for the 2c5 and 6c values, and above right, for the 8c and 12c values. In this way, stamps of all values would be seen the right way up, hence why the watermark in the 2c5 and 6c values is upright and in the 8c and 12c values is sideways.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in Black. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. The postmark is inscribed "L-Ewwel Jum tal-Ħrug", (First Day of Issue), "Restawr ta' Monumenti", (Restoration of Monuments), "Malta", the name of the respective locality and the date "15.2.80". The emblem of UNESCO is also incorporated in the postmark.

Sale of these stamps, up to 12.45 p.m. on the first day of issue, realised the sum of £M37,275. This set will remain on sale up to Saturday, 27th September, 1980, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

continued from page 3

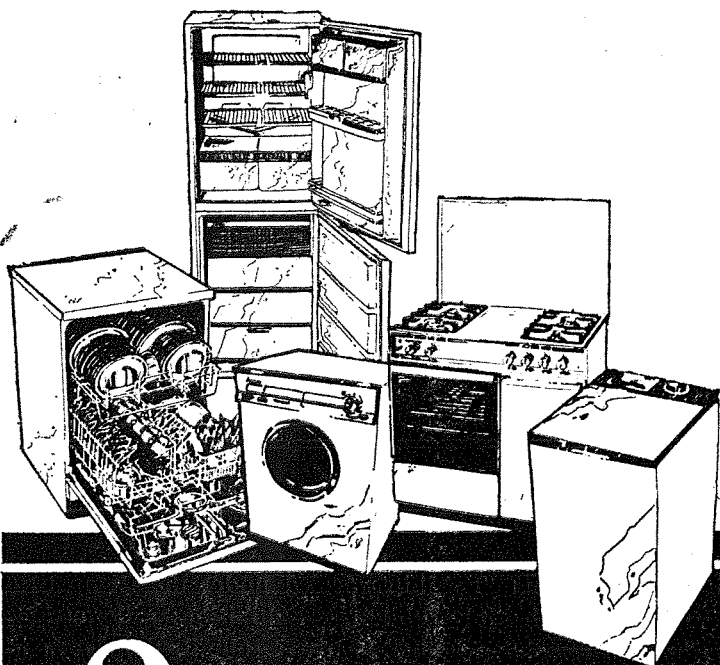
rixtions which hinder the inclusion of better quality exhibits and a higher number of entries.

Condition 15 states that "Exhibits entered under the Competition Section in the Vth, VIth and VIIth Malta Philatelic Exhibitions will not be accepted." WHY? and who will remember whether an entry submitted in 1974 is the same entry being submitted in 1980? The members of the Organizing Committee should know that there is such a thing called "learning" — learning from past experience and mistakes, improving on one's collection. Frequently held exhibitions enable collectors to improve, do more research, change items, etc... in other words stand a better chance to gain an award.

Another final observation. This is our National Philatelic Exhibition, even though the word "National" does not appear in the whole leaflet. The conditions and regulations do not make it clear whether Maltese citizens alone are eligible to participate in the competition section. Maltese philatelists want to have this clearly defined.

Finally, we quote from Regulation No.24: "The Organizing Committee reserve the right to amend or to change any of the above regulations. If time permits such amendments and changes would be published and participants informed accordingly".

Let's make good use of that regulation.



Zoppas

Fridges · Washing Machines
Dishwashers · Cookers

NIZZI

the household name

B'KARA, COSPICUA, FLORIANA, GZIRA, HAMRUN, PAOLA, RABAT, SLIEMA, VALLETTA.

STAMPING AROUND WITH NICK

Cross Country Postmarks?

Suspicious teachers at Malmesbury Comprehensive School in Wiltshire caught students in the school cross country skipping home for coffee during their run when they were out of sight of school. Afterwards they splashed mud on their shorts and finished the run back at school all puffing.

Postmistress Olive Talbot of nearby Brokenborough was asked to help and as her shop is half-way round the course, pupils have to call in to be date-stamped on their hands as proof that they have stuck to the route.

Counterfeit Stamps

A counterfeit block of the 3 cents United Nations Day issue of 25 October 1954 has been revealed in New York. The official stamps were printed by Thomas De La Rue by steel-engraving whereas the counterfeit stamps were produced by photo-offset, thus text and design are heavier and less clearly defined. Be on your guard.

Discount Stamps

In May, every household in Sweden received two coupons each entitling the recipient to the purchase of a booklet of 20 special discount undesignated stamps costing 20Skr. The stamps, with unlimited period of validity, prepay the postage on internal postcards and letters weighing less than 100 grams. Use of these discount stamps enables Swedish indivi-

duals to offset any increase of postage rates in the coming months or even next year.

"EUROPA" Stamps

The Conference of European Posts and Telecommunications meeting in Bruxelles between 10-21 March, adopted further measures to protect the stamps denominated "EUROPA". The emblem, motif and denomination become the sole property of the member postal administrations of the CEPT and are further protected by International Copyright.

The CEPT reunion also agreed on the subjects for the "EUROPA" stamps for the years 1982 to 1984. The schedule of subjects for the next four years will be:

1981 — "Folklore".

1982 — "Historical Events".

1983 — "Great Works of Man".

1984 — for the 25th Anniversary of the CEPT, the subject will be common to all nations and a competition will be launched in 1982 to select the design.

Flag Stamps

The first 16 stamps in the UN Flag series will be issued on 26 September 1980. The flags of Bangladesh, El Salvador, Fiji, France, Guinea, Hungary, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Rwanda, Suriname, Turkey, Cameroon, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia will be reproduced on the stamps. Seven million copies of each flag will be printed.

(Continued on page 32)

MALTA — A DIARY

January-April 1980

compiled by
JOSEPH FARRUGIA

- 2-1-80 A new "postage paid" handstamp was used at the Central Mail Room and at all Branch Post Offices as from Wednesday, 2nd January 1980. The "postage paid" handstamp used at the Central Mail Room, besides the date, has inscribed: "POSTAGE PAID — 2c5 — MALTA", and those used at the Branch Post Offices also have inscribed thereon the name of the respective locality. The existing "postage paid" handstamps for the 1c and 2c values shall continue to be used, but the "postage paid" handstamps for the 5m value was withdrawn at the close of business on Monday 31st December 1979.
- 8-1-80 New metal date-stamps were put in use at the Central Mail Room, Valletta and at the Parcel Post Office, on the 8th January 1980. At the Central Mail Room 6 new metal hand date-stamps and 4 at the Parcel Post Office were put in use. The ones at the Central Mail Room were inscribed, "VALLETTA — MALTA" and those at the Parcel Post Office, "PARCEL POST SERVICE — MALTA". A number of old hand date-stamps at these two localities were withdrawn from use at the close of business on the day immediately preceding the introduction of the new metal hand date-stamps.
- 11-1-80 New metal hand date-stamps were put in use at the Paola, Cospicua and Birkirkara Branch Post Offices on the 11th January 1980. At Paola B.P.O., 4 new hand date-stamps, inscribed, "PAOLA — MALTA", were put in use. At Cospicua B.P.O. 3 new hand date-stamps were introduced, inscribed "COSPICUA — MALTA". At Birkirkara B.P.O., 3 new hand date-stamps, inscribed, "BIRKIRKARA — MALTA", were put in use. Again a number of old hand date-stamps at these three localities, were withdrawn from use at the close of business on the 10th January 1980.
- 16-1-80 New metal hand date-stamps were put in use at Hamrun B.P.O. (one in number), Gżira B.P.O. (one in number), Rabat B.P.O. (one in number), Victoria B.P.O., Gozo (two in number), and Mgarr B.P.O. Gozo (two in number) on the 16th January 1980. The new hand date-stamps at these localities were inscribed: "HAMRUN — MALTA", "GŻIRA — MALTA", "RABAT — MALTA", "VICTORIA — GOZO", and "MGARR — GOZO". Again old hand date-stamps at these localities were withdrawn from use at the close of business on the 15th January 1980.
- 16-1-80 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "Next Stamp Issue — Flemish Tapestries Set — 30 January 1980", was used, on and off, during the period 16th to 29th January 1980, at the Central Mail Room.
- 21-1-80 A new "postage paid" handstamp was used at the Central Mail Room, Valletta, as from Monday 21st January 1980. Besides the date, the "postage paid" handstamp also has inscribed thereon: "POSTAGE PAID — 1c5 — MALTA".

- 22-1-80 The 5m stamp of the present Decimal Definitive Postage Set has been reprinted by Printex Limited. This stamp was available for sale at the Philatelic Counter of the G.P.O.
- 30-1-80 The fourth and final Flemish Tapestries Set, issued today. A special hand postmark was used on the first day of issue.
- 11-2-80 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "Next Stamp Issue — Restoration of Monuments Set — 15 February 1980", was used during the period 11th to 14th February, 1980, at the Central Mail Room.
- 15-2-80 The "Restoration of Monuments" set, issued today. A special hand postmark was used on the first day of issue.
- 18-3-80 The 8m and 10c stamps of the present Decimal Definitive Set have been reprinted again by Printex Limited. These two stamps were available for sale at the Philatelic Counter of the G.P.O.
- 31-3-80 A special hand-postmark was used at the Philatelic Counter, G.P.O., Valletta, from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon on Monday, 31st March 1980, the first anniversary of the End of Military Facilities Agreement with Britain. The special hand-postmark is inscribed: "Jjum il-Helsten — L-Ewwel Anniversarju — 31.3.80 — Valletta — Malta". (Freedom Day — First Anniversary — etc.). The emblem of Malta is also incorporated in the postmark. A posting box was placed at the Philatelic Counter on the 31-3-80, for the convenience of those philatelists who wished to have their philatelic mail stamped with this special postmark, to be sent through the post.
- 1-4-80 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "Next Stamp Issue Dun Gorg Preca — 12 April 1980" was used, on and off, during the period 1st to 11th April, 1980, at the Central Mail Room.
- 3-4-80 In connection with World Health Day (7th April) which this year has been dedicated by the World Health Organisation to the health hazards of cigarette smoking, a machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "World Health Day — Smoking or Health — The Choice is Yours", was used on the 3rd, 5th and 7th April, 1980, at the Central Mail Room.
- 12-4-80 "Dun Gorg Preca" commemorative postage stamp issued today. A special hand-postmark was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail at the G.P.O. and all B.P.O.s and Sub-Post Offices, commemorating the Centenary of the Birth of Dun Gorg Preca.
- 23-4-80 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "Next Stamp Issue — Europa '80 Set — 29 April 1980" was used during the period 23rd to 28th April, 1980, at the Central Mail Room.
- 24-4-80 A special hand post-mark to mark the first centenary of the death of Louis Shickluna, a Maltese who became well known as a pioneer ship-builder in Canada was used at the G.P.O. on Thursday, 24th April, 1980. The postmark is inscribed: "Louis Shipbuilder — Malta 1808-1880 Canada — 24-4-80 Valletta". The postmark also incorporates a line drawing of a steamship, designed by Louis Shickluna, being built in one of his docks.
- 24-4-80 Registration envelopes of a new format were also on sale as from Thursday, 24th April 1980. The envelopes are made of white duplex manilla paper, with the emblem of the Republic of Malta circumvented by the words, "MALTA — REGISTRAZZJONI" in the

top right corner.

The envelopes were available from all Post Offices in three sizes at the following prices, viz:

Size "G" 156mm x 95mm — 4c.

Size "H" 203mm x 120mm — 5c.

Size "K" 292mm x 152mm — 7c.

28-4-80 A Branch Post Office was opened at 228, Victory Street, Qormi, as from the 28th April, 1980.

The hours of business and the business to be transacted at this Branch Post Office shall be those laid down by the Post Office (Hours and Business) Regulations, 1979, (Legal Notice No. 113 of 1979). With effect

from 28th April, 1980, postal articles posted in the area served by the Qormi Branch Post Office were postmarked by a date-stamp inscribed with the following words:

"QORMI — MALTA"

A number of Post Office Private Delivery Boxes are available at the Branch for renting.

The telephone number of the Branch is 47893.

29-4-80 "Europa 1980" set issued today. A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.

(Continued from page 29)

British Monopoly Axed?

The British Post Office mail handling monopoly will end soon, if plans to create private-run "document bureaux" obtain the necessary licence from the Corporation.

Reporting in "The Sunday Telegraph", industrial correspondent Desmond Harding states that "changes in the way the Post Office operates will be recommended in a report prepared by civil servants at the Department of Industry" and that a ministerial statement in the Commons will be followed by a white paper and legislation later this year. The "bureaux" will be established in every important commercial city and it is thought that the organizations involved would guarantee delivery of a letter from one business town to another within 24 hours. However the Post Office's monopoly in handling private mail will remain intact.

Import Control

As a result of new regulations regarding the importation of various

items, collectors who receive their approval selections properly declared through the post will be required to fill an import licence. One collector who frequently receives approval material through the post says that he has filled about 6 import licences to obtain the release of the packet. Without doubt such practices irritate stamp collectors.

Reply Coupons

The first study of this matter was made way back in 1976 by Herr Eric Prier who prepared a Study Paper (No. 40) for the Gibraltar-Malta-Cyprus Study Circle (both German and English versions are available from the writer for inspection). The Malta Study Circle has recently produced a revised paper on the same subject coupled with fresh information and additional notes using a useful classification based on that employed by specialist societies in the field. Seven illustrations are not enough to treat this difficult subject.



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