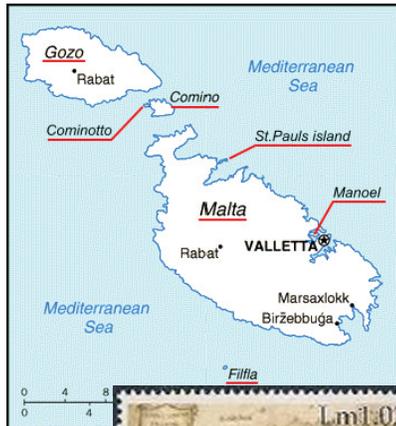


World of Stamps: Malta

By Geir Sør-Reime



2005, 1745 map of Gozo, Comino, Cominotto and Marfa Peninsula, Sc. 1193

The Republic of Malta has an area of only 121 square miles and a population of 420,000, making it one of the smallest and most densely populated states of Europe. Today a member of the European Union, Malta has a long and complex history.

Malta is an archipelago, where three of the islands, Malta itself, Gozo and Comino are inhabited.



Malta joined the Roman Empire 264BC. It became part of the Eastern Roman, or Byzantine Empire 395-870 AD. Then followed Arab and Muslim rule, until the Norman took Malta in 1091. In the following centuries, different dynasties were in control of Malta, until Charles I of Spain in 1530 gave the island to the Order of St. John, today better known as the Order of Malta. The Knights ruled Malta until Napoleon

1926 Gozo fishing boat (Sc. 144)



1999 900th anniversary of Order of Malta (Sc. 962)

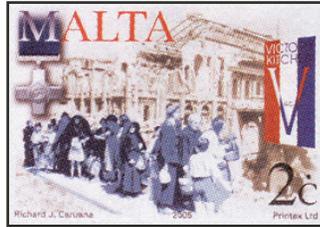


invaded the islands in 1798, on his way to Egypt.

1998 200th anniversary of Napoleon's capture of Malta: French coming ashore, Napoleon (Sc. 942-943)

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After a popular rebellion against the French, and with Italian and British aid, the French surrendered to the British in 1800. The 1814 Treaty of Paris confirmed British possession of Malta.



2005 60th anniversary, end of WWII



Above, 1957 Award of George Cross (Sc. 264); right, 1967 Award of George Cross (Sc. 363)



Malta withstood intensive German and Italian air attacks during WWII, and the entire island was in 1942 awarded the George Cross for its bravery.



1922 Self-government overprint (Sc. 86)

Malta got a degree of self-government in 1921 (stamps were overprinted SELF-GOVERNMENT in 1922), but was suspended 1933, only to be re-established 1949 under the new 1947 Constitution, when stamps overprinted SELF-GOVERNMENT/1947 were issued (in 1949).



1949 Self-government (Sc. 208)

After the war, it was considered to integrate Malta into the UK, and a referendum in 1956 confirmed that the majority of the voters agreed to this. But because of boycott from the opposition, the proposal came to nothing.

Instead, in 1964, Malta achieved independence as a Dominion, and in 1974, Malta decided to become a Republic (see page 3). Malta joined the European Union 2004 (page 3) and adopted the Euro currency in 2008.



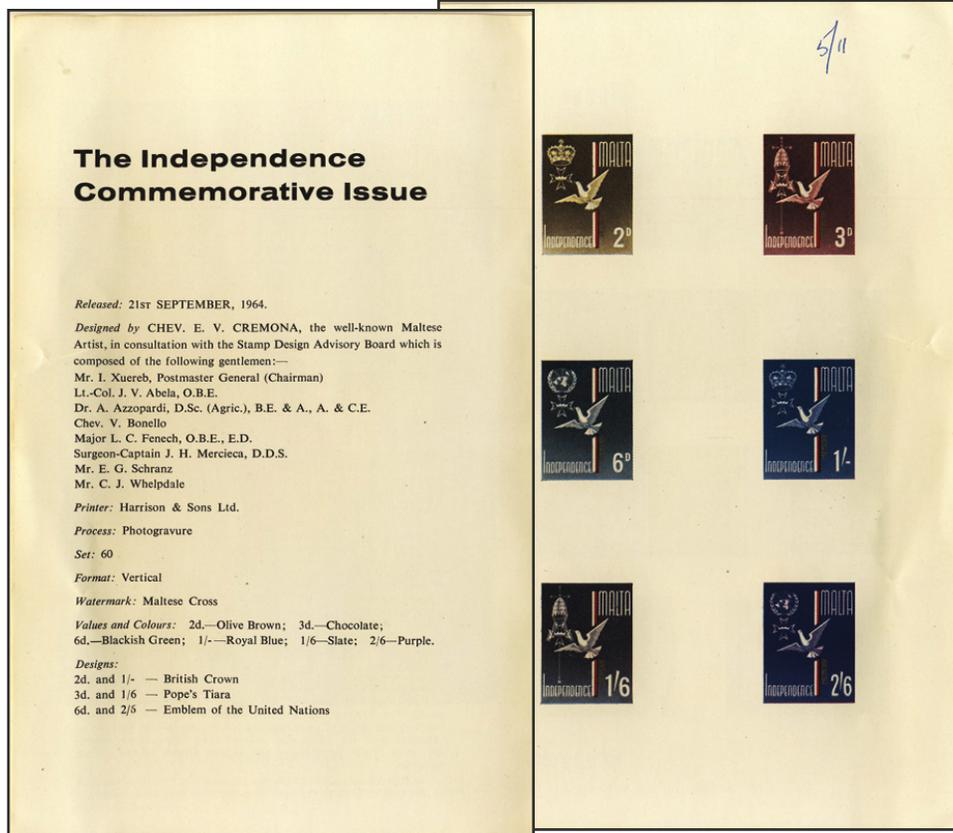
1964 Independence (Sc. 303)



1975 Proclamation of Republic of Malta (Sc. 488)



2004 Enlargement of European Union, Maltese membership (Sc. 1160)



The 1964 Independence commemorative issues, a special print from a brochure entitled "Malta Independence Stamps" issued by the Government of Malta in commemoration of independence

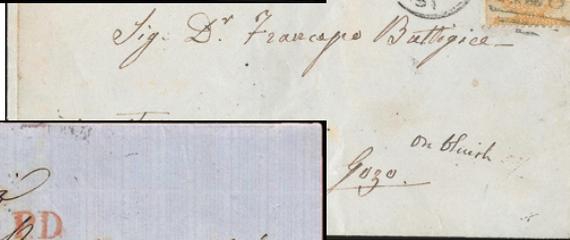
A postal service has existed on Malta for a long time, and in 1857, British stamps were officially made available for prepayment of overseas mail, being first cancelled by an "M" obliterator, later by "A25" obliterators, often with a Malta datestamp beside it. (See page 4.)

The first stamp of Malta (Sc. 2) was issued 1860 and was intended for local mail only, overseas mail still be-



Left, a December 1860 cover with a Malta brown-ochre 1/2d stamp (Sc. 2) neatly cancelled by an "M" obliterator—the only use of the cancellation which can be tied to a date.

Below, Malta 1860 1/2d buff on bluish paper (Sc. 2) tied by neat strike of A25 barred oval handstamp,



also with "Malta OC 2, 1861" circular date stamp on cover to Gozo;



Left, Malta Great Britain used abroad 4d addressed to Messina, tied by "Malta JY 30 69" and "A 25" cancel.

ing handled by the British Post-Office on the island and using British stamps. Therefore, only ½ p stamps for the local



Left, 1885 1st general issue (Sc. 8); center, 1885 1st general issue (Sc. 11); right, 1960 centenary of 1st Maltese stamp (Sc. 281)

rate were issued 1860-84, all in the same design portraying Queen Victoria. From January 1, 1885, the local authorities took over responsibility for all mails, and a new range of stamps was issued.

These portrayed Queen Victoria in various frames. Pictorial stamps were introduced 1899-01, some of the de-

signs stayed in use until the 1950s.

In 1903, stamps with the portrait of King Edward VII were issued, and in 1914, stamps with the portrait of King George V. In 1922, current stamps were overprinted "SELF-GOVERNMENT" to celebrate the introduction of a bi-cameral Parliament.



1899 pictorials: left, ancient galley (Sc. 16); right, "Malta and Britannia" (Sc. 17)



Left to right, 1903 King Edward VII (Sc. 21); 1914 King George V (Sc. 60); 1922 "Self-Government" (Sc. 83); 1926 "Postage" (Sc. 116)

Stamps showing the allegory of "Malta" and "Malta and Britannia" were issued 1922-26. These were inscribed "Postage and Revenue" and were re-issued 1925 with a "POSTAGE" overprint.



Left, 1922 "Malta" (Sc. 98); right, 1923 "Malta and Britannia" (Sc. 102)



1926 King George V and arms of Malta (Sc. 131)

A completely new "postage" series was introduced 1926-27, a series which partly consisted of small stamps showing King George V and the arms of Malta and partly large pictorial designs.



1926 Port of Valletta (Sc. 141)

In 1928, these stamps again were overprinted “POST-AGE/AND/REVENUE”. The 1926-27 series was then re-issued 1930 with a “Postage & Revenue” inscription.



Left to right, 1928 overprints (Sc. 158, 160); 1930 “Postage & Revenue” inscription, in bottom tablet (Sc. 167)



1938 St. Paul (Sc. 205)

The new King George VI definitives, introduced 1938, had no service inscriptions. It contained a number of stamps with the King’s portrait in a medallion and various pictorial designs. The same designs, and some additional ones, were also used for the Queen Elizabeth II



1956 Queen Elizabeth II def. (Sc. 246)

definitives of 1956-58.

In the meantime, Malta participated in the colonial omnibus issues for the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935 and the Coronation of King George VI in 1937, as well as the 1946 Victory issue.



Left to right: 1935 Silver Jubilee of King George V (Sc. 184); 1937 Coronation of King George VI (Sc. 190); 1946 Victory (Sc. 207)

These were followed by the 1949 Royal Silver Wedding and Universal Postal Union issues (page 7), and the 1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II single (page 7).



1949 UPU set (Sc. 225-228)

In 1948, the King George VI definitives had also been overprinted SELF-GOVERNMENT/1947 (see page 2) to mark the re-introduction of self-government and the new unicameral Parliament. In 1950, three stamps were also issued to celebrate the visit of the then Princess Elizabeth to Malta, and in 1951, three stamps were issued for the seventh centenary of the presentation of the scapular to St. Simon Stock (he is believed to have received it from the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1251).



Left to right, 1953 Coronation (Sc 241); 1950 Visit of Princess Elizabeth (Sc. 229); 1951 St. Simon Stock (Sc. 232)



1954 Royal Visit (Sc. 242)

A single stamp was also issued for the 1954 Royal Visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Malta, and also in 1954, three stamps were issued to mark the centenary of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.



1954 Dogma of the Immaculate Conception (Sc. 243)

In 1957, the first three stamps designed by famed Maltese designer Emvin Cremona were issued, commemorating the awarding of the George Cross to Malta (see page 8).

Cremona dominated Maltese stamp design during the

1957 First George's Cross Issue,
Sc. 263-265



1958 Awarding of
George's Cross (Sc. 271)

of the George Cross, the 1960 set
commemorating the 19th centen-
nary of the shipwreck of St. Paul
on Malta, the 1960 indepen-

1960s and
70s. He also
designed
1958-59
sets devoted
to the
awarding



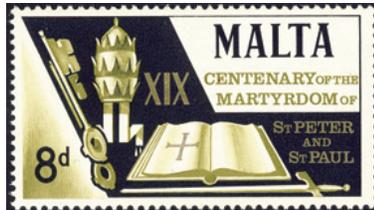
1965 definitives
(Sc. 318, 321)



1965 400th anniversary
of Valletta (Sc. 348)



1960 1900th
anniversary of
St. Paul's ship-
wreck on Mal-
ta (Sc. 275)



1967 1900th anniversary of
martyrdom of St. Peter and St.
Paul (Sc. 365)



1965 Great Siege,
400th anniversary
(Sc. 334)

dence issue, the 1965
definitives, the 1965 set
for the 400th anniversa-
ry of the Great Siege, the 1966
set for the 400th anniversary
of the founding of Valetta, the 1967 set for
the 25th anniversary of the awarding of the
George Cross to Malta (see page 2) and the

1968 400th death anniversary of
Grand Master La Valette (Sc. 388)





1969 5th anniversary of independence (Sc. 405)



1973 definitives, Regatta (Sc. 464)

set for the 1900th anniversary of the martyrdoms of Saints Peter and Paul (page 8) and the 1968 set

for the 400th death anniversary of Grand Master La Valette (page 8), amongst several others during that period. Other notable stamps designed by Cre-

mona include the 1969 5th anniversary of independence set, the 1970 Council of Europe Art Exhibition set, the 1973-76 definitives, the 1975 Proclamation of the Republic set, not to forget a large number of Christmas stamps and Europa stamps.



1967 Christmas (Sc. 375)



1975 Proclamation of Republic of Malta (Sc. 489)



1970 Council of Europe Art Exhibition (Sc. 409-416)

In 1972, Malta replaced its old pre-decimal coinage with a decimal one, consisting of 10 mils to a cent, and



1972 Decimal coinage (Sc. 446)

100 cents to a Maltese pound. A definitive series depicting the new coins was issued and some older issues were also surcharged in decimal currency.



1972 surcharge on Sc. 321 (Sc. 448)

A new definitive series was introduced 1981, telling the story of Maltese industry, and in 1984, three stamps celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Republic.

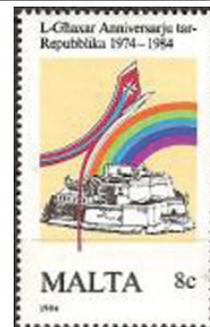


Above, 1981 definitives (Sc. 593, 595, 604); right, 10th anniversary of the Republic (Sc. 651)



1985 centenary of Malta post-office (Sc. 655)

Already in 1960, three stamps had been issued for the centenary of the first Maltese stamps, and in 1985, four stamps celebrated the centenary of the establishment of the independent Maltese post-office.



The 25th anniversary of independence was marked with six 1989 stamps, and the same year, the new state arms was featured on a single stamp.

The same year, the important USA-USSR summit took place on Malta, and a single stamp with the portraits of Presidents Bush



1989 25th anniversary of independence (Sc. 730, 734)



1989 US-USSR Summit, Malta (Sc. 748)

and Gorbachev was issued for this event that really had great implications on modern world history.



1991 definitives: Ta Hagraat neolithic temples (Sc. 783), Cottoner gate (Sc. 784)

A series showing the cultural heritage of Malta was issued 1991.

Modern commemoratives include 1999 for the bicentenary of the uprising against the French, 1992 for the 50th anniversary of the George Cross Award, 1993 for



First Day Cover with 1999 Uprising Bicentenary issue (Sc. 997-980)

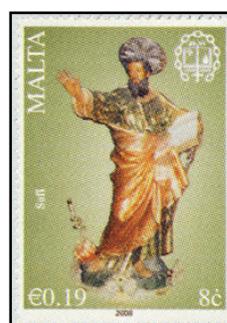
the 5th Small States Games of Europe, held on Malta, 1998 for the bicentenary of Napoleon's capture of Malta, 1999 for the 900th anniversary of the Order of Malta, and



2003 European Small States Games, Malta (Sc. 1125)



1999 25th anniversary of Republic of Malta (Sc. 995)



2008 for 2000th birth anniversary of St. Paul (Sc. 1340)

another for the 25th anniversary of the Republic, 2003 for the Small States of Europe Games, 2005 Old maps of Malta (see page 1), 2005 60th anniversary of end of WWII, and 2008 for 2000th birth anniversary of St. Paul.

As of January 1, 2008, Malta joined the Euro zone and from then on, the Euro has been the official coinage of Malta. For a while, stamps bore double denominations, in Maltese pounds and in Euros.



Dec. 31, 2007 souvenir sheet for last day of pound currency (Sc. 1328)



1999 definitive (Sc. 985)

A definitive issue featuring flowers was introduced in 1999, replaced by a new series featuring historic artifacts in 2009.



2009 definitive, Pleistocene period (Sc. 1383)

Malta has issued postage due

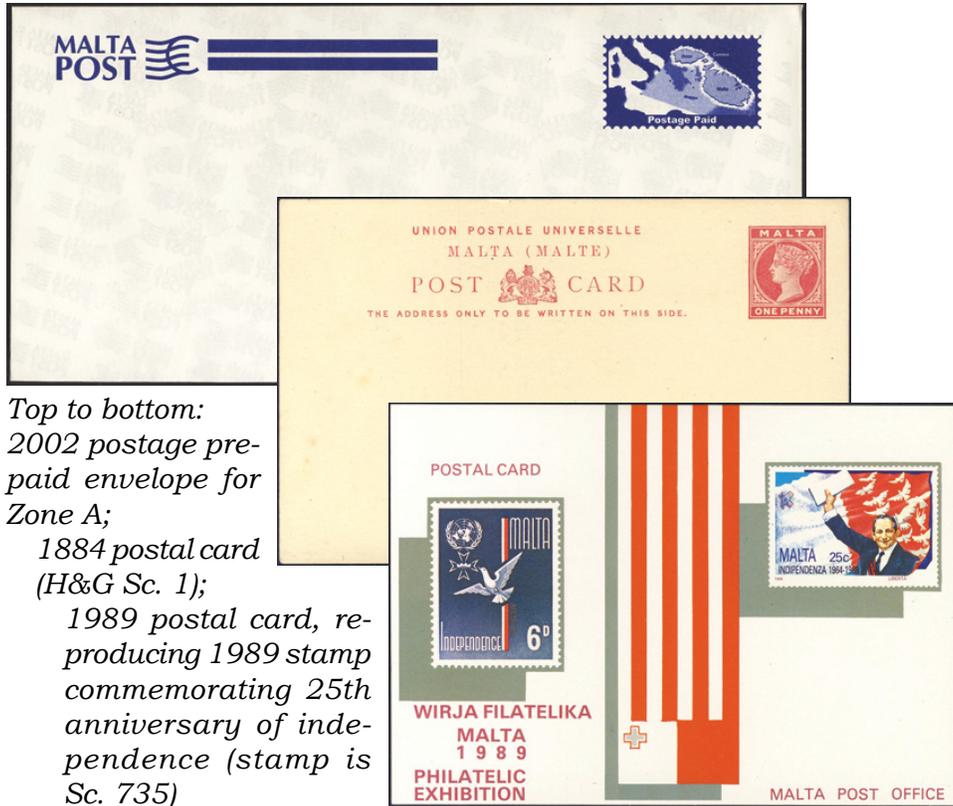
stamps since 1925, the first issue being simple type-set labels, later, different designs have been used, between 1925 and 1972, the design displayed a Maltese cross, later designs have been ornamental.



Left to right: 1925 postage due (Sc. J1), 1925 postage due (Sc. J11), 1973 postage due (Sc. J32), 1993 postage due (Sc. J40)

Stamp booklets have been issued since 1970, in recent years, the annual Europa stamps have also been issued in a booklet.

Naturally, Malta has also issued a number of postal stationery items, and pre-stamped postal cards are still being issued, now normally supplementing commemorative issues.



*Top to bottom:
2002 postage pre-
paid envelope for
Zone A;*

*1884 postal card
(H&G Sc. 1);*

*1989 postal card, re-
producing 1989 stamp
commemorating 25th
anniversary of inde-
pendence (stamp is
Sc. 735)*

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