

THE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA

MALTESE NEWSLETTER

OUR MOTTO: BUILDING BRIDGES

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The EU Trio Presidency Malta- January to June 2017

Every six months a different member state holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Holding the Presidency involves mediating and brokering compromises between the 28 EU member states and between EU institutions like the Council, European Commission and European Parliament. The sixth-month Presidency rotates between all the member states. The presiding member state draws up the agenda for the Council and chairs all meetings.



Ministers from the presiding member state chair the meetings with their fellow EU ministers (EU Council configurations). Meetings of the European heads of state and government and of European foreign affairs ministers have their own permanent chairs, however.

Each Presidency works closely with the two member states that preceded or will follow it. This partnership is known as the 'Trio

Presidency'.

The trio determines long-term objectives and draws up an agenda of the major issues the Council will tackle over the next 18 months. To this end, each of the three member states draws up its own six-month project. The Netherlands is partnered with Slovakia, which will hold the Presidency from July to December 2016 and Malta, which will hold the Presidency from January to June 2017.



MARK BORG - Elvis Look-Alike

Mark Borg is a Sydney-based entertainer and Elvis Presley impersonator. He has over ten years professional experience and has travelled internationally as ELVIS.

He has travelled and performed in many countries around the world including:

Malta (1998,2010,2012), Germany (1998,2012), England (2012), SouthAfrica (2008) New Zealand (1998,2000,2004,2006), Singapore (2005) India (2005)

Some of Mark Borg's earliest exposure was an appearance on the Australian Music show SOUNDS as Elvis back in 1985. But in the last ten years, he has more seriously entertained and pleased crowds

nationally and internationally. Voted Winner of the Best Elvis in Grace Brothers/BMG Artist of the Century Competition, 1999.



Mark brings a special touch of the light hearted to every show. His audience rapport and interaction engage and include you like no other Elvis tribute or impersonation. Mark not only captures Elvis' music but something of the sensitivity of Elvis the man. Mark entertained the Maltese community of Adelaide this

year during the Our Lady of Victories Annual Event at the Parish community Hall Lockleys.

MALTA Independence Day celebrated in India



On 21 September 2016 the High Commission in India celebrated the 52nd Anniversary of Malta's Independence in New Delhi. The celebration was held in the presence of Chief Guest Hon. V.K. Singh, Minister of State of External Affairs in the Government of India.

Indian Members of Parliament, Government officials, members of the Maltese community in India, friends of Malta in India and the diplomatic community were greeted by High Commissioner Stephen Borg and First secretary Andrew Caruana

Galizia at a reception on the lawns of the Imperial Hotel in New Delhi.

In his brief welcoming address High Commissioner Borg thanked the Chief Guest for his presence at the celebration and recalled Malta's and India's proud and rich history. The event was made possible with the generous support of our sponsors.

The Gift of Music

Ron Borg – Adelaide - Australia



Nelson Mandella once wrote these words of wisdom!!! **WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD AND MAKE IT A BETTER PLACE. It is in your hands to make a difference**

On Sunday , 2nd October at The Festa tal Bambina at Lockleys Parish in Adelaide, I did see what this wise man meant!



After the mass at the Lockleys parish, the weather had changed, and it started to rain. Consequently, the procession tal-Vitorija was cancelled and the rosary was recited inside the church with the Maltese Queen of Victories band playing the Marian hymns inside.

This went beautifully, but it meant that the Band did not do the annual stop just outside St Raphael's Nursing Home to play some music for the elderly residents there who usually take great pleasure in listening to the band playing for them.



Not wishing to disappoint, the bandplayers braved the rain and ran over to the home and assembled inside much to the surprise of the dear old people there who were still sitting in the dining room. Boy!! You want to see their faces light up as the Maltese Queen of Victories Band played the "Ave Maria" and a few marches. Some even got up for a dance with Sister Bonny Attard! By the smile on their faces and their applause from their frail hands, it was obvious, that we had made a difference to lift their spirits for the day! Their "Thank You" and appreciation were our

reward.

As if that was not enough, just as the bandsmen were leaving, a young man came over to me and asked me fervently if a "couple of us" would go to his father- in law's room and play him something because he was bed-ridden. How can you refuse a request like that! About four of us went to this old Italian gentleman's room, and there by his bedside where his family were, we played the Fatima, Ave Maria. The beaming smile on this old timer's face was something to behold. What can I say..... Thank God for this gift of Music!



**THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER CONGRATULATES
THE MALTESE QUEEN OF VICTORIES BAND OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
FOR THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY SINCE ITS FOUNDATION 1981 - 2016**



The Police Band

The Malta Police Force Band was established by the then Commissioner of Police, Lieutenant Colonel Henry William Bamford in 1919. The band was formed up of bands men emanating from the Kings Own Regiment and the Malta Royal Artillery, under the charge of its first Director of Music Mro. E. Magro, being an ex-director of the Commander-in-Chief Orchestra in Malta. Due to service exigencies, the Band was disbanded for several instances, and it was again reactivated in 1994, on the 180th anniversary of the foundation of the Force. It made its debut in the presence of a well known Russian Police Band and the famous 'Banda dell' Arma dei Carabinieri' during a march past and Guard of Honour at St. George's Square, Valletta.



Over the past years, the Band performed on numerous occasions throughout the Maltese Islands, which performances were enthusiastically received by those in attendance. During December, 1999, the Malta Police Force Band participated for the first time in a massed-bands display with the Armed Forces of Malta Band, in Valletta in order to mark the 25th anniversary since Malta gained its status as a Republic. Since 2004 the band has been invited to participate during the Malta Military

Tattoo together with several other foreign bands. In 2005, the Band also had the opportunity to perform in Sicily.

Upon Commissioner John Rizzo's initiative, during 2002, 2005 and 2011, the Band recorded its first three compact discs including some of the best numbers from its wide music repertoire ranging from military marches to classic and popular music. It was also the incumbent Commissioner, who during the year 2004, introduced for the first time a dancing ensemble formed up of band members. In 2006, the Police Band was further complimented with the Pipes & Drums.

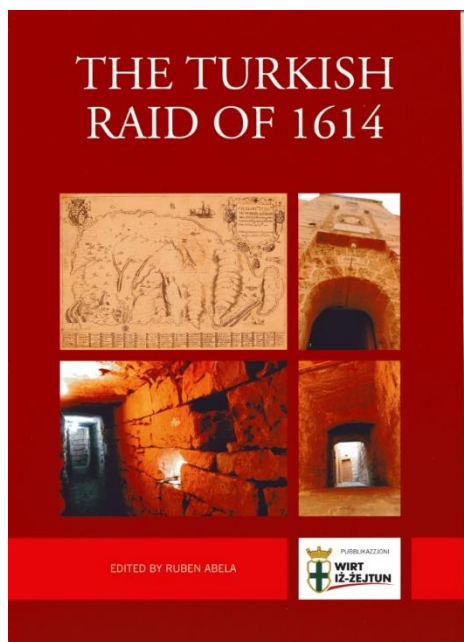
The Band currently has a complement of sixty-three musicians who are all regular members of the Force, hailing from various Districts and Branches in Malta and Gozo. The Band is under the baton of its Director of Music, Senior Inspector Maestro Anthony Cassar, the fifth director since its establishment.

The Band's role is to fulfil several commitments in support of the Malta Police Force during ceremonial occasions. Throughout the year the Band also holds frequent displays and musical concerts. These are held during national and other festivities organised by the Malta Tourism Authority, the Ministry for Gozo, Local Councils and charitable fund raising activities in Malta and Gozo. The Band strives to achieve the highest standards and aims to be a bridge between the Corps and the general public.



Book Review – Nicholas Cutajar, Adelaide, Australia

THE TURKISH RAID OF 1614



Many of us Maltese who studied the 16th Century history of Malta would recall the Great Siege that ended in 1565 with the defeat of the invaders from the Ottoman Empires. Subsequently, the defeat of Lepanto, 1571, off the western coast of Greece, halted any further dreams of expansion in the Mediterranean. However in subsequent years (1598, 1603 and 1601) further incursions on the islands were made but to no avail. But in mid 1614, the Ottoman army embarked on a major assault, referred to here as "*razzia*" in Maltese, with some 52 galleys, obviously this time determined to inflict heavy losses.

Front page of the book containing the 8 papers presented during the second symposium organized by "Wirt iż-Żejtun" under the same title, commemorating the 4th Centenary of the historical event.

This no less important event in the annals of the Maltese history was the subject of a symposium held on the 5 July 2014 at the Old Parish Church of St. Catherine at Żejtun. It was organised by the revamped "*Wirt iż-Żejtun*". Eight papers by some of most learned historians were read at this event, eventually edited and published (2014) by Ruben Abela.

In the first reading, "**A Failed and Final Attempt: A Historical Account Of The Ottoman INCURSION of 1614**" by Giulia Privitelli (U of M) present a historical and socio-political context for this Ottoman incursion. It is based on 17th and 18th Century reports and accounts of the Order of St. John. At the same time, it explores contrasting perspectives of the political, military and strategic implications of the attack. It also aims to establish the impact of the attack on the Order of St. John and more importantly the local inhabitants. Charles Debono of Heritage Malta, contributes "**The Late Stages of The Ottoman *Razzia* on Malta in 1614**". His treatment of the *razzia* after the defeat at iż-



, Fort St. Lucian defended the intrance of Marsaxlokk Bay.
(Photo: Nicholas Cutajar)

Żejtun moves to the next scene, namely St. Thomas Bay. There they pillaged and sailed towards Mellieha Bay where they landed without difficulty. Ashore, they replenished their water supplies from is-Salini (today a nature reserve).

Before returning to the ship, a group made their way up the hill setting fire to farmhouses on their way. Before returning to their ships, they gained access to the Sanctuary of Our Lady and ransacked the sacred site. This skirmish proved again the importance of the small towers around the Islands in particular St. Thomas and St. Paul's (Wignacourt) Towers.

WORLD WAR 1 -Carmelina's Story

June 1940 - Malta's Wartime Ordeal begins



In 1939 the population woke up to reality when intensive work on the airfields was under way; the black-out practice, broken by the silence of the search-lights maneuvers; gas-mask drills in government schools and the wailing sirens became the ordeal of our days.

Valletta's Grand Harbour was looking empty as the battleships, cruisers, destroyers - that always filled our ports - were leaving, and the evacuation of vulnerable cities was recommended by the Acting Governor. British families were returning home and it was another indication that the war was on the doorstep. I was sixteen years old and our family were prepared for the war, because father had a fanatical discernment of the hostile situation in Europe.

He was up to date with the news bulletin on radio and newspapers. He was a conformist of safety measures. I learnt from him that appeasement of Hitler was implausible and his main concerns were - observation of the curfew, the black-out practice and to see that the family has their gas mask accessible at whatever time. The evening News of the 10th June made the solemn announcement: 'Mussolini declares war on Britain and France.' Malta is on alert. We had mixed emotions: apprehension: fear: penitential sorrow and resolutions: prayers and insecurity. Italy is close to Malta - Syracuse only 60 miles away from our shores, and at 6.40am 11 June 1940 the Italians were over Malta bombing our little Island. They timed their attack well. They picked that hour of the day when people had just left home - the men to go to work and the women and the children to hear their daily Mass. That year schools started their summer holidays on June 1 as a precautionary measure.

I was startled at that early hour when my bedroom suddenly lit up; the room rocked with thundering sound, lightening and broken window glass. Stupefied I exclaimed: "Is this a storm? Impossible! Yesterday was such a beautiful cloudless blue sky: Is it . a bad dream?" My reflections were abruptly interrupted by mother, brother and sisters who came into the room and queried: "is this another air raid practice?... or is this an air attack?" ... the war ... yes -- we were now into the immediate sphere of war. This was the first air attack. A bomb wrecked our house touching our back garden in "Msida", killing two people; others hit the new hospital on Gwardamangia Hill and Pieta Creek - my father was travelling on the bus and just missed a direct hit at Pieta. Six Royal Malta Artillery soldiers were killed at Fort St Elmo as the post they were manning received a direct hit. Events happened so suddenly, the Maltese found themselves under attack by the Italians by sunrise, before they could realize it.

The sirens installed on Police stations and ARP Centres sounded the Air Raid Warning and the Raiders Passed and the church bells rang All Clear at least eight times on the first day. During air-raids we took cover under the dining table and after the all clear walked in the garden to listen and scan the blue sky for fear of a Reconnaissance Italian flight in anticipation of a raid attack in the night. In between we lamented with one another about an unknown future. News broadcast reported the raids and casualties. There were eight air attacks on that day but the severest one took place at sunset with a squadron of 25 bombers in a formation of five packs that raided various localities. After a long spell of fear convulsed by the thundering of anti-aircraft guns fired by the monitor Terror berthed at "Gzira", the church bells were ringing to signify that it is 'all clear' and one can come out into the open.

I stood at the doorway watching a great number of evacuees walking past me. I experienced the horror of an 'Exodus' of refugees. They were coming from the blitzed area of Gzira. It was the result of the eighth bombardment at sunset on the neighbouring town of Gzira where the anti-aircraft monitor - HMS Terror - was berthed in its waters and became a war target. The bombardment inflicted devastating damage - homes were ruined and persons were lying buried under demolished buildings. Its proximity to the inland, caused concern and encouraged evacuation. Entire families -babies, children, adults and

The screaming of dropping bombs and their explosion, the hum-dam of falling and crushing masonry, persuaded us to accept the neighbour's invitation to evacuate. The next morning we accompanied them to their relatives residence in Rabat, a distance of 10 miles. The hostess was warm and kind. She received other refugees. She shared her house - a cellar and garden and two other storeys with five other families. The reward was love; care and support for each other that helped us endure the scourge of a looming tragedy.

Premju Anzjanita' Attiva

Minn dawn il-kolonna tal-Maltese Newsletter nixtieq nifrah lis-Sur Joe Bartolo li nhar is-Sibt li għadda waqt serata fil-Lukanda Ta' Ċenc f'Ta' Sannat, ingħata l-Premju 'Anzjanita' Attiva 2016 minn idejn is-Segretarju Parlamentari għall-Anzjanita' Attiva u Persuni bi Bzonnijiet Speċjali Dr Justyne Caruana li uriet is-sodisfazzjon kbir tagħha li dis-sena għadd rekord ta' anzjani applikaw għal dan l-unur – mhux inqas minn 24 parteċipant minn Malta u Għawdex. Raddet ħajr ukoll lill-Bord tal-għazla mmexxi għal darb'ohra mill-Prof Carmelo Borg li fisser kif timxi l-proċedura biex il-membri jaslu għall-verdett finali. Kienu prezenti dawk kollha li daħlu għal dan il-Premju fosthom Lino Debono, ex deputat laburista li ngħata Premju Speċjali mill-iSpeaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati, prezenti għall-okkazjoni li qal li dan il-Għawdexi baqa' attiv billi għadna nsibuh sallum bħala l-President tal-Union ta' ex membri tal-Parlament. Kienu prezenti wkoll l-Onor Robert Cutajar u Mons Isqof Mario Grech li f'messaġġ qasir li ta fisser kif is-soċjeta ta' zmienna għad għandha bzonn l-anzjani tagħna għax minnhom għandha ħafna x'titgħallem.

Joe Bartolo waqqaf l-grupp Talent Mosti u għal dawn l-aħħar 35 sena hađem fil-qasam tal-palk u t-televizjoni bħala attur. Rawwem ir-Razzett tal-Markiz, għamlu Ċentru Nazzjonali u Kultura li jigbed fil-Mosta talent internazzjonali. Dejjem jagħti sehmu għal Volontarjat, għid u ferħ lejn il-proxxmu. Is-serata tmexxiet mis-Sur Narcy Calamatta, showman u attur magħruf.

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B'rih jew b'riefnu ...miiktub minn Lina Brockdorff - Malta

Niftakar lil ziti, bi tbissima fuq xoffitha u bi ftit inkejja tikkwota dan il-qawl kull darba li tisma' lil ommi tilmenta minn xi emikranja, sturdament jew stonku mqalleb: Eh, oħt, b'riħ jew b'riefnu minn hawn irridu nsiefru. Ommi ma kinitx tiflah aktar għal dan il-qawl, kienet tixtieq li tiżbranaha lil oħtha.

F'islienna nsibu li l-kelma rih hija popolari fl-idjomi u l-qwiel. Tgħid, min jaf għaliex? Jista' jkun minhabba l-fatt li r-rih huwa fattur ewlieni tal-klima Maltija? Għandna ħabta niftaħru mal-barranin li bilkemm issib jum wieħed biss fis-sena li fih ma ngawdux ix-xemx ħanina. Nieqfu hemm, ma nkomplux nammettu li ftit huma l-jiem li fihom ma jonfohx ir-rih, kemm dak kiesaħ iqaxxar ħmar tax-xitwa u kemm l-



iehor imdellek u moħmi tas-sajf. U li kieku ma kienx hekk kif tispjega l-fatt li xi hadd laqqam lil ġżiritna bħala “The island of the four winds”! Kien għadhom ma basrux li fil-ġejjieni qarib jista’ jġigri li dan il-riħ għandu mnejn ikun jiswa mitqulu deheb biex jipprovdi l-enerġija.

Immorru lura lejn il-qawl tar-riħ li ma nafx f’liema żmien twieled u kemm għandu għomor. Qed insemmi ż-żmien għax dan jaf iġib bidla f’bosta xorti saħansitra fit-tifsira tal-kliem. Għandi naħseb li riħ u riefnu baqgħu jfissru l-istess haġa li kienu jfissru mijiet ta’ snin ilu; waqt li l-kelma safar ġarrbet bidla ġmielha. Forsi mhux fiha nfisha, għax baqgħet tfisser li thalli x-xtut ta’ Malta u Għawdex.

Imma ta’ min inħarsu lejn kif kulturalment safar ħadet tifsira differenti biex ma ngħidx kważi opposta għal kollox għal dak li kienet tfisser snin ilu.

Malli ssemmi s-safar illum iġġib quddiem għajnejk xi vapur lussuż ta’ għoxrin sular jew akhtar u li fuqu ssib il-vera ġenna tal-art ... jew tal-baħar, kif trid, kemm għall-ikel u x-xorb u mhux inqas għad-divertiment. Jekk il-baħar ma tantx jinżillek aqbad ajruplan li bih tista’ żżur l-ibgħad rkejjen tad-dinja – dejjem biex tiddeverti u tistrieħ jew biex tesplora u tfittex l-avventura. Holma li żgur jixtieqha kull maħluq.

Imma, lura fiż-żmien meta s-safar kien perikoluż u mistmerr, dawk li jhallu lil xtutna żgur li ma kinux jitolqu b’kapriċċ. Setgħu kienu eżiljati, maqbuda lsiera, qaddiefa tax-xwieni, inkella aktar qrib żmienna kienu mgeġġlin iħallu art twelidhom biex jaqilgħu l-bieċa hobż. Timmagina li kien fih xi ħajr safar bħal dan? Mela naħseb li taqblu miegħi li dan il-qawl dwar riħ u riefnu kien ipiġi stampa tetra ta’ diqa ġmielha. Imbagħad jekk kellek għażla ridt tiftakar: Qatt issiefer kontra r-riħ.

Nerġgħu lura għar-riħ, basta ma nikshux wisq. Barra mill-fatt li naqblu li ladarba ngawdu r-riħ kuljum, qisna lhaqna ħadna xi ftit tal-kunfidenza ma’ dil-kelma riħ ukoll fejn il-kurrent tal-arja m’għandux x’jaqsam. Tant hu hekk li jekk taqbdex flissjoni jew influwenza hafifa, aktarx tesprimi ruħek billi tgħid li mbukkajt riħ, jekk mhux ukoll riefnu jew riħ idoqq l-iskotti. Aktarx li dak li qed jisimgħek minflok ma jagħdrek erħilu jinkik u jikkripak: biġu lil tal-mithna! Jew biġu lil Lazzru! U tgħid dan Lazzru min kien? U x’kellu x’jaqsam mar-riħ? Ikolli ngħid li kien xi proxxmu magħruf li kellu mithna tat-thin u allura għalih ir-riħ kien ikun ta’ ġid.

Qabel ma naslu għal din l-arja tiċċaqlaq, ta’ min jiftakar li nużaw il-kelma riħ ukoll biex tfisser meta libsa, flokk jew qalziet ma jkunx joqgħodlok sew u xi mkien jidher imlahlah, ngħidu għandu r-riħ. Imma issa ejjew nitkellmu bis-serjetà dwar il-propja kelma riħ u kif din inbnew madwarha numru mhux ħazin t’espressjonijiet.

Minħabba l-fatt li r-riħ huwa invizibbli ħadna d-drawwa li nqisuh bħala oġġett bla siwi, hekk li ngħidu moħħ ir-riħ għal min nieqes mill-għaqal; u tar mar-riħ għal xi hadd jew xi haġa li ma nafux x’sar minnha. Għal negozju li minnu m’għandekx tama ta’ wisq qligħ, jew meta nagħmlu xi haġa li minnha ma nipprofittawx wisq, ngħidu għar-riħ bla xita. Meta xi hadd irabbi l-arja żejda malajr ngħidu li ha r-riħ. Jekk thoss li għandek vantaġġ fuq haddiehor tista’ tgħid li tinsab fuq ir-riħ inkella li għandek ir-riħ fil-qala’.

Lil min jinsab bejn haltejn meta għandu għażla nagħtuh parir biex ma jhallix is-shiħ għar-riħ. Lil dak li narawh inkwetat xi ftit iżzejjed dwar xi problema ngħidulu erħilu jonfoħ ir-riħ. Xi hadd li ma jkunx jaf fejn sejjer, malajr ngħidu fuqu li sejjer fejn isuqu r-riħ, waqt li għal min hu galantom u mhux ta’ kemm idawwar fehmtu ngħidu għax raġel bil-għaqal ma jdurx ma’ kull riħ. Għal min filgħodu jistenbah b’xi burdata kerha tisma’ malajr il-frazi riħ isfel illum, waqt li meta tkun bi tbissima fuq fommok jgħidulek riħ fuq.

Jekk xi hadd iddiżappuntak bla ma kiddek wisq tghid riĥ il-lixx, waqt li fil-każ li sirt taf lil xi hadd għal żmien qasir u reġa' għosfor ngħidu r-riĥ li ġabu reġa' ħadu. Meta tinqal għalna xi ħaġa li qatt ma konna nobsruha ngħidu li nqalgħet minn taħt ir-riĥ. Mentri jekk xi hadd jidher li għalina hu xi ftiit stramb jew li mhux għalkemm nifhmuh erħilna llissnu x'riĥ kien dak inhar li twieled?

Min jimxi bir-riĥ isib ruĥu nofs ta' triq. Din tfisser li jekk ikollok min jimbuttak f'xi avventura li ser tibda, żgur li jirnexxilek u f'kemm ilna ngħidu tasal f'nofs ta' dak li qed tipprowa takkwista. Waqt li jekk qed tagħmel il-kuraġġ għax taf li għandek min iżomm miegħek, tisma min jgħidlek: Bir-riĥ ta'htienu qed juri snien. Lil dik li thobb tpaċpaċ fuq in-nies inwissu: Kelma żgħira fuq ġieħ issir mithna tar-riĥ. Lil dak li jafda wisq fin-nies spiss iwissuh: Oqgħod attent għax taħsbu riĥ u ssibu slieħ (ħmieġ tal-ghasafar). Imbagħad hemm xi qwieli li tassew jagħtuh mill-aġar lir-riĥ: isimghu ftiit:

*Riĥ il-Lbiċ jieħu u le jġib.
Ir-riĥ imexxi l-bastimenti, imma hu jgħarraqhom ukoll.
Min jiżra' r-riĥ jaħsad it-tempesti.
Ir-riĥ tax-Xirokku jġieġhel l-ernjużi jdoqqu.
Riĥ isfel meta jniggeż il-ħmar kemm jiżfen.
Mejju bla riĥ u l-biedja tifraħ bih.*

Waqt li hemm oħrajn li huma pożittivi:

*Ir-riĥ fuq itajjar l-egħbur (plural ta' 'għabra').
Ir-riĥ lit-taħhan u x-xita lir-rahħal.
Riĥ ta' siegħa jnaddaf qiegħa.*

Bdejna din il-kitba dwar ir-riĥ billi kkwotajna l-qawl ta' B'riĥ jew b'riefnu ... Ser nispiċċaw fuq l-istess nota: Għabra u riĥ, li għandek hawn thallih!

L-AGOSTINJANI F'Għawdex JIFFESTEGGJAW - FI-

okkazzjoni xejn komuni tal-Biċentinarju mit-twaqqif tal-Provinċja Agostinjana Maltija (1817-2017) u tat-350 sena mit-twaqqif tal-Knisja ta' Sant' Wistin fir-Rabat Għawdex (1666-2016), nhar il-Gimgha filgħaxija fil-Knisja ta' dawn il-Patrijiet fil-Victoria saret Akkademja Muziko Letterarja li fiha ħadu sehem il-Kor u l-Orkestra 'Stella Maris' flimkien ma' għadd ta' solisti taħt id-direzzjoni tas-Surmast Carmel P. Grech li huwa l-Maestro di Cappella t'hawnhekk.

Smajna siltiet mużikali mill-isbaħ fosthom l-Innu lil dan l-Isqof għaref ta' Ippona, 'Sancte Pater Augustine', is-salmi 'Dixit' u 'Laudate Pueri' ta' Ferdinando Camilleri, is-'Salve Regina' ta' Carmelo Zammit, 'Beata Virgo Maria' ta' Nazzareno Refalo, it-'Tantum Ergo' ta' Vincenzo Bugeja, flimkien ma' żewġ poeziji sbieħ tal-okkazzjoni waħda miktuba mir-Rev Fr Geoffrey G. Attard u l-oħra mill-poeta veteran Ganninu Cremona. F'din l-okkazzjoni ġie ppreżentat il-ktieb dwar it-350 Sena mit-twaqqif tal-Knisja ta' Santu Wistin fir-Rabat Għawdex miktub minn Patri Peter Cachia li anke tkellem dwar dan ix-xogħol tiegħu u fisser kif wasal għal din il-pubblikazzjoni interessanti. Il-Provinċjal tal-Ordni Patri Raymond Francalanza radd ħajr lil kull min għen f'dik l-okkazzjoni kif l-istess għamel il-Pirjol Patri Adeodato Schembri li tant iħawtel b'risq il-knisja u l-kunvent.

Ħadt gost immens nisma' d-diskors interessanti li għamel dwar Sant Wistin l-Arċipriet tal-Parroċċa tax-Xagħra Monsinjur Carmelo Refalo li elebora dwar is-suġġett 'Fil-Qalb ta' San Wistin'. Is-serata ta' madwar siegħa u nofs intemmet bl-Antifona 'Sancte Pater Augustine' mużika tal-Kan Luigi Fenech. Ħadt pjaċir nara attendenza sabiħa għal din l-okkazzjoni ta' tifikira fosthom lill-E.T. Monsinjur Isqof Mario Grech u lill-Onor Segretarju Parlamentari għal Anzjanita Attiva u Persuni bi Bżonnijiet Speċjali Dr Justyne Caruana. Ippreżenta ferm tajjeb is-serata ż-żagħżuġh Francesco Pio Attard (figlio d'arte). **Kav Joe M Attard** emarjos@hotmail.com

NOTTE BIANCA – Another success story

Valletta's favourite Saturday happened with a bang this year. 100 events. Over 1,000 creative participants. More than 70,000 visitors experienced the largest cultural event in Valletta. This year's Notte Bianca returned bigger and better than ever



Notte Bianca has now become a staple on the Maltese cultural calendar. Every year locals and tourists of all ages flock to the capital to immerse themselves in the unique atmosphere created by the creative energy of hundreds of artistic events, the assembly of people from all walks of life, the feeling of communality through gastronomy, and of course the rich history and heritage of Valletta. The festival's holistic approach to arts and culture truly places Valletta, and all of its singular attributes, firmly in the spotlight.

"I am proud of the combined efforts of the Notte Bianca team and this year's participants," says Sean Buhagiar, Artistic Director. "From the start, there has been a true commitment by

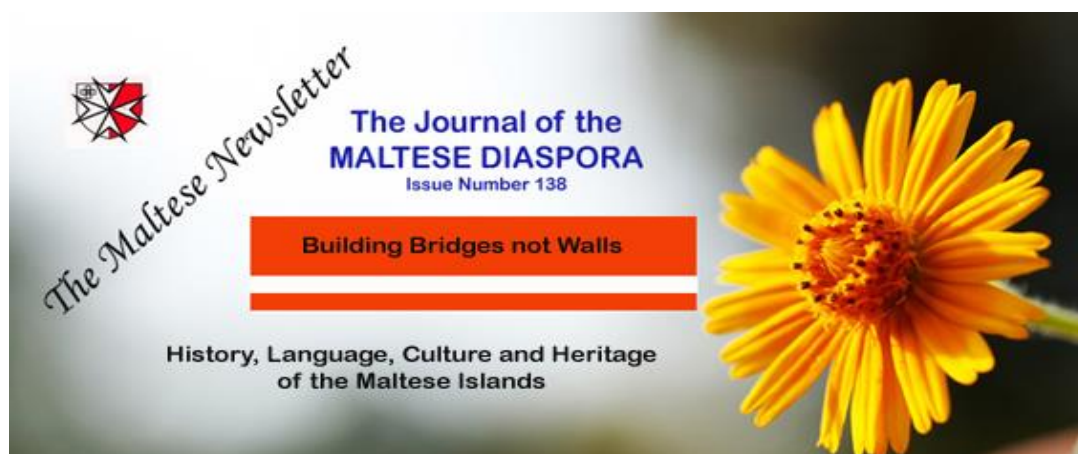
everyone involved to ensure this year's Notte Bianca did not rest on its laurels but gave something fresh and exciting. We introduced a new variety of projects with our digital media instalments. We invited more internationally renowned guests such as Paris-based audio-visual artists Nonotak. I wish to thank everyone involved for making this year another overwhelming success. I hope we can continue to foster this forward-thinking spirit as we slowly begin preparations for our next edition. We hope to see you all again next year."

Among the many innovative projects this year was *Ġeġja Dgħajsa*. The project transformed Strait Street into a sea of paper boats set on metal stalks, which moved and swayed at the slightest touch. *Festa Festun*, an interactive light installation played on one of Malta's quirky feast traditions. It allowed members of the public to control an array of 1,000 individually addressable light bulbs along Republic Street to create grandiose visuals full of movement and colour.

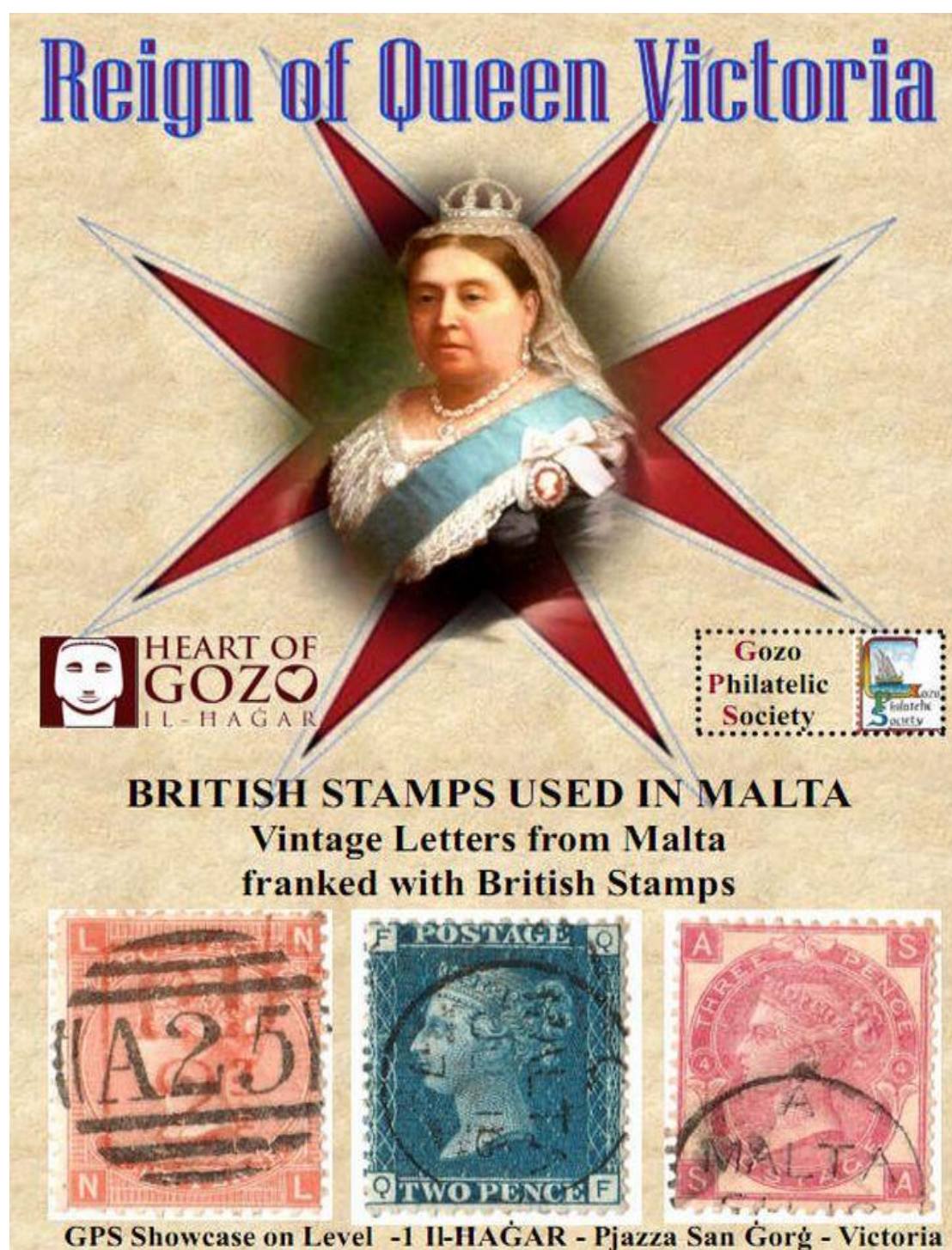
This year's Notte Bianca also hosted community projects such as *Serata Kamrata* headlined by Ċikku I-Poplu, who also left the community space better than it found it. This was in line with the festival's ethos.

Improved logistics and social media exposure also assisted in improving the festival's accessibility and reach. The special ferry services from each of the Three Cities to Valletta, allowed Birgu, Bormla and Senglea to become more integrated into the festivities. While the use of live streaming through Facebook, allowed those who could not be physically present in the city to experience Notte Bianca's highlights in real time.

Next year, Malta will captain the European Union's Presidency, while 2018 will crown Valletta as European Capital of Culture. These two honours will give Malta the opportunity to showcase its festival organising talents to a more global audience. The success of Notte Bianca 2016 is proof of what Malta and local creatives have to offer the international cultural scene and why Valletta is deserving of these prestigious honours. <http://www.maltaculture.com/news/category/council>



Reign of Queen Victoria



BRITISH STAMPS USED IN MALTA
Vintage Letters from Malta
franked with British Stamps

GPS Showcase on Level -1 Il-HAGAR - Pjazza San Ġorġ - Victoria

There is still time to view an exhibition of a selection of philatelic items from the renowned Juncker Melitensia collection recently donated to the GPS, which should be of interest to non-philatelists too. The Gozo Philatelic Society exhibit is housed in their showcase on level -1 at Il-Hagar Museum in Victoria.

It includes numerous original 19th century letters sent from Malta using Great Britain stamps from the reign of Queen Victoria, together with further loose stamps showing clearly the A25 (both types) or M identificatory postmarks. Opening hours at Il-Hagar Museum, St George's Square, are 9am-5pm seven days a week, there is no entrance fee.



Agenzija Zghazagh is hosting a Christmas Market from Saturday 03 December 2016 10.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m. till Sunday 04 December 2016 from 10.00 a.m. till 5.00 p.m.

The Christmas Market provides young entrepreneurs - less than 35 years of age - with the opportunity to display and sell their products in a festive atmosphere. Products, which ideally should be made or sourced in Malta, shall include the following:

- Arts and crafts
- Jewellery and ceramics
- Cosmetics and beauty products
- Christmas decorations, stocking fillers and gifts
- Pastries and sweets
- Festive food and beverages
- etc

Young entrepreneurs who are interested in participating in the Christmas Market should submit an application on agenzija.zghazagh@gov.mt. This form which can be downloaded by clicking [here](#) or from www.agenzijazghazagh.gov.mt or www.youthinfo.gov.mt, is to reach the

Agency by not later than Friday 21st October 2016 12.00 p.m.

TOP AWARD FOR CHARLIE FARRUGIA



President Maltese RSL Sub-branch – South Australia

He survived the relentless World War 2 bombardment of his homeland Malta, won his parachutist wings while serving with the British forces

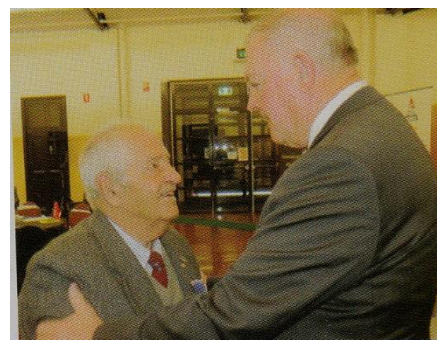
in 1947, came to Australia and then joined the RSL in 1961, and today serves as our Maltese sub-branch president.

Carmelo “Charlie” Farrugia has now been presented with the RSL’s highest award, the Meritorious Medal at the 2016 State Conference which was held in the Torrens Training Depot drill Hall in Adelaide. His investiture (below) by national president Rod White follows the granting of life-membership in 1997 and the AOM medal in 2010 ‘for sterling work rendered to the Maltese community these past 50 years.’ (THE SIGNAL)



Receiving the charter.

Receiving the Charter March 1968





Youth Cafés

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ started its first Youth Cafés in July 2012 within AĊCESS Community services.

The purpose of these Youth Cafés is to create inclusive and tolerant spaces in the heart of the community, which provide services that are accessible, available and responsive to the needs of young people. This way the Youth Cafés offer support and alternative leisure facilities, where young people between 13 and 25 years can spend their free time interacting with peers in a safe environment, exploring their talents and developing important lifelong personal and social skills. Youth Café managed by youth workers operates twice weekly in the evening during which young people can benefit from:

A safe space, inclusive and tolerant of people from all social and cultural backgrounds;

A place where young people can socialize and organize activities according to their needs and interests while developing relationships with peers and adults;

Youth information services;

Services which are already available within AĊCESS.

With this in mind these Youth Cafés will be encouraging not only young people to undertake creative activities which will help them become better active citizens but also **the community at large.**



Salesians of Don Bosco - Malta

Being young in Malta is also about running about, enjoying oneself and making friends. This is all we are about at our Oratories and even all other Salesian realities. Enjoying the experience being lived is crucial for the young. We strive to offer a space where this is done in a healthy manner. All realities while offering positive recreational experiences are still managed with a holistic approach.

Salesjani Sliema - The Salesian Oratory in Sliema is a space for young people to relax, meet friends while being challenged for personal growth. Well in a few words a Youth Center the Salesian

way! The Oratory has a number of branches including the brigades, Theater and a Church with service for everyone.

For more information go to the website www.salesjani.org

Dar Dun Bosco – Dingli - This is the Salesians Oratory in Dingli. Similar to the one in Sliema it is a space to grow in a family atmosphere. Formation meetings together with sport and play are part of this reality. For more information click <http://www.salesiansmalta.org/content/fact/dar-dun-bosco-salesian-oratory-dingli>

Live ins and Camps - Both offered in Dingli, as part of the Vocation Promotion Section. Various live ins are organised over the year with the 'Camps' experience offered in Summer. Other realities also offer formation live ins. For more information go to the website vocations.salesiansmalta.org

Boscofest - Boscofest is a Christian educational experience for young people from all over Malta through the mediums of art, music and drama. Young people united together for the summer months work together in a Salesian environment.

For more information go to the website www.boscofest.org

St Philips – Senglea - A reality still in its infancy. The Salesian Community present there is providing experiences to the youth of the area to have fun and grow in a healthy environment.

WHO WAS MABEL STRICKLAND?



The Honourable **Mabel Edeline Strickland** OBE (8 January 1899 – 29 November 1988), was an Anglo-Maltese journalist, newspaper proprietor and politician.

Mabel's father was Sir Gerald Strickland, 6th Count della Catena, 1st Baron Strickland, (24 May 1861 – 22 August 1940). He was a Maltese and British politician and peer, who served as Prime Minister of Malta, Governor of the Leeward Islands, Governor of Tasmania, Governor of Western Australia and Governor of New South Wales, in addition to sitting successively in the House of Commons and House of Lords in the Parliament of the United Kingdom

Having never married or had children of her own, Mabel Strickland's chosen heir was her great nephew Robert Hornyold-Strickland. Mabel Strickland lived the most of her life at Villa Parisio in Lija, Malta.

Strickland founded a newspaper group in Malta with her father and her stepmother, Lady Strickland, DBE (Margaret, daughter of Edward Hulton).

In 1935 she became editor of *The Times of Malta* and "*Il Berqa*" before

taking over as Managing Director of the Group on the death of her father in 1940. The paper never missed an issue throughout the Siege of Malta in World War Two, despite taking direct hits on several occasions. She formed and led the Progressive Constitutionalist Party during the 1950s and was one of the principal political leaders of the 1950s, participating in the integration talks in 1956-57 as well as opposing independence in 1964. She was elected to the Maltese Parliament again in 1962. She always fought passionately for a free and independent press and to maintain Malta's ties with Britain and the Commonwealth. On her retirement she has established the Strickland Foundation in the name of her family. Mabel Strickland died on 29 November 1988, and is buried in the family crypt in the Cathedral in Mdina, Malta. Her tombstone lies near that of her father, who was the principal influence in her life.

Mabel Strickland, OBE, died on November 29, 1988, a month short of her 90th birthday. She was an indomitable woman and, in her prime, was very much part of the fabric of Malta, especially to anyone who had been in Malta during World War II and in the ensuing 25 years.



Those who knew her personally admired her spirit and determination; she was a colourful character, mixing easily with people from all nationalities, social backgrounds and across all differing political persuasions. She was first and foremost an editor and publisher but she also made time to pursue a political and business career.

While some people found her larger than life, others found her passionate and caring who had an infectious and mischievous sense of humour and a deep, booming voice that many have tried to imitate over the years. She was trusting of most people she came in contact with – except some politicians. That might have been because she was a woman in a man's world or because her ownership of the Times of Malta and The Sunday Times of Malta made her wary of people befriending her for possibly the wrong reasons.

Having been a politician herself, she was acutely aware of how politicians behaved in a small island culture, balancing their legitimate responsibilities of representing their constituents' concerns and guiding their country against the lures of personal profit, power and prestige. I well remember my aunt illustrating the pitfalls of politics and the need for a strong, inner moral compass when she explained the "personal sacrifice" she made when she gave up her job in 1950 as editor of the Times of Malta (a job she loved) to serve her country as a politician. Although born in Malta, Mabel Strickland grew up in Australia, where her father had a succession of governorships.

SOCIOLOGY OF THE MALTESE ISLANDS



'Sociology of the Maltese Islands', edited by Dr Michael Briguglio and Dr Maria Brown was launched on 6 October at the University of Malta. Hon Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Education and Employment launched the book. The panel also consists of sociologist Angele Deguara, and journalist James Debono. Sociology of the Maltese Islands provides a broad sociological introduction to various areas of Maltese society currently featuring in public and scholarly debate and research. This book may be of interest to a

wide range of students, including undergraduates, students at post-secondary level, as well those carrying out research at post-graduate level.

Researchers, policy makers, politicians, journalists, activists and the general public may find this book useful for the provision and scholarly review of data and debates on key issues, areas and concepts relevant to contemporary Maltese society.

Edited by Michael Briguglio and Maria Brown. Includes contributions by Godfrey Baldacchino. Angela Abela, Katya DeGiovanni, Joanne Cassar, Marvin Formosa, Maja Miljanic Brinkworth, Nathalie Grima, Maria Brown, Ruth Baldacchino, JosAnn Cutajar, Brenda Murphy, Marceline Naudi, Peter Mayo, Manwel Debono, Saviour Rizzo, George Cassar, Valerie Visanich, Noel Agius, Michael Briguglio, Mary Grace Vella, Silvan Agius, Helena Dalli, Ian Bugeja, Jacqueline Azzopardi, Mario Vassallo, Carmen Sammut.

7th WORLD SUMMIT ON ARTS & CULTURE – VALLETTA, MALTA 18 – 21 October 2016



The arts and culture face a number of challenges and opportunities in the 21st century as new technologies affect the production and distribution of goods and services; new patterns of migration emerge; and national contexts constantly shift with austerity measures and requests for reform. At the same time, artists and culture operators aspire to extend their impact to other sectors, while striving to ensure freedom of expression and cultural diversity.

New models of cultural leadership are more important than ever as we work to affirm the arts and culture as pillars of social development. At a time when the notion of participatory governance is prevalent, no decision can be made without the involvement of multiple stakeholders, and the tradition of top-down leadership is no longer the only model. Artists, networks, advocacy groups, and professional organisations play an increasingly important role in engaging people, debating the issues, and proposing solutions to the challenges of our times.

The Summit will explore changing perceptions of leadership and address a number of questions: What are the issues? How are decisions being made, and by whom? How is leadership defined in different cultures? How can governments and civil society collaborate? And where do we go from here?



Jack's Fusion Launch Debut EP

Impulse – a sudden pushing or driving force, an accelerated desire to act and a fitting name for Jack's Fusion's debut EP.

The choice of the EP title, the band explains, was purely due to its reflection of the band's energy and spirit, comparable, perhaps, to an adrenaline rush.

Fronted by Emma Grech on vocals, with Luke Deguara and Jacob Spiteri on guitar, bassist Kurt Bezzina and drummer Jean-Luc Camilleri, Jack's Fusion formed in 2014 and has been writing original material ever since. "Music is our passion and expressing ourselves through music is very important especially through writing and composing," says Jean-Luc. "This EP is a landmark step for us, as it encompasses all the hard work, ideas and phases we've been going through personally and as a band."

Jack's Fusion formed in 2014 and has been writing original content ever since

The first original song released by the band was Electric, a song carrying the same concept of undying energy. "In every live gig we play, we try as much as possible to give a memorable performance and to leave everyone in the audience with the same energy which we want to transmit through our music," adds Emma.

Plans for the EP have been brewing for over a year. Recorded at Jubox Studios, the six-track EP contains five new original songs, including the single Electric. An EP typically has around five songs, but the band was adamant on adding an extra song and exceeding expectations, as was the same line of thought held throughout planning for the launch itself.



Photo: Vincienne Bezzina

"As our first major project as a band, we wanted to make both the EP and the launch itself as big as we could possibly manage. It's been a hectic couple of months in preparation but we're positive it will be worth it," says Kurt.

The EP was launched with what the band describes as a concert, a celebration of all the work put into the process itself. The event was held at the Salesian Theatre, the place where Jack's Fusion had its first formal performance as a band, making the choice of venue not only significant, but sizeable enough to be able to host a larger audience. On the night, the band was joined by other musicians, as well as guest band Pyramid Suns.

www.facebook.com/JacksFusion





Hawke EU Centre
for Mobilities, Migrations and
Cultural Transformations



EUROPE, THE WORLD AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Hawke EU Centre Annual Lecture by Baroness Janet Royall

On behalf of **Professor Anthony Elliott**, Executive Director of the Hawke EU Centre for Mobilities, Migrations and Cultural Transformations, please accept this invitation to attend the Hawke EU Centre Annual Lecture, followed by a cocktail reception.

In this lecture, Baroness Janet Royall argues that the values of the European Union have assumed greater importance as we seek global solutions to the challenges of the 21st century.

Baroness Janet Royall of Blaisdon PC was Leader of the House of Lords and a member of the British Cabinet under UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown's Administration.

Date and Time Monday 31 October 2016, 6.00 – 8.30pm

Venue Allan Scott Auditorium, Hawke Building, UniSA City West Campus

A cocktail reception will follow the lecture in the Kerry Packer Civic Gallery

RSVP

Please RSVP to HawkeEUcentre@unisa.edu.au or phone 08 8302 1071

by **Monday 24 October 2016**



Youth.Inc [Malta]

Who we are?

Youth.inc is an inclusive education programme, based on applied learning, for young people between the age of 16 and 21. The aim of the programme is to help young people to improve their standard of education and gain more knowledge, values and skills to enter the labour market or gain qualifications to continue in further education and/or training.

Youth.inc is under the remit and management of Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, which adopts a more youth-centred approach and seeks to strengthen the complementary role of formal and non-formal learning.

Validation and Certification

Youth.inc has two different levels of entry in accordance with the Malta Qualifications Framework. The programme is based on assisting the young person to gain key competences, sectoral skills and underpinning knowledge at the different levels.

Included in the learning are skills that are transferable to the next stages of education and training:

- Applying theory to work-related challenges
- Acquiring knowledge
- Gaining basic skills
- Embracing values
- Working in a team

• Being creative and innovative

Youth.inc is currently being offered as a full-time Level 1 and Level 2 programme at the complex of Agenzija Zghazagh in Santa Venera.

Entry to Youth.inc: The entry requirement for Level 1 or Level 2 is completion of full time compulsory education. The entry age is 16 years and young people who register for the programme are required to sit for an assessment which determines their participation in either Level 1 or Level 2 depending on their competences and skills. Young people entering Level 1 will progress to Level 2 upon successful completion of Level 1.

Maintenance Grants - Young people attending the Youth.inc programme on a full time basis are entitled to receive a stipend as stipulated in Legal Notice 327.178 Students' Maintenance Grants Regulations.

How to apply - If you wish to apply for the Youth.inc programme just click [here](#) or send us an email on agenzija.zghazagh@gov.mt or call on 22586700 and ask for Bryan Magro.

JOHNNY DEPP, JUDI DENCH AMONG ACTORS FOR MALTA- SHOT 'ORIENT EXPRESS' REMAKE



Actors Johnny Depp, Judi Dench, Daisy Ridley, and Michelle Pfeiffer to join host of renowned actors for remake of Agatha Christie's novel 'Murder on the Orient Express'

Renowned actors Johnny Depp, Daisy Ridley, and Judi Dench have joined the cast for the remake of Agatha Christie's novel 'Murder on the Orient Express', parts of which will be shot in Malta. World-renowned actors Johnny Depp, Judi Dench and Michelle Pfeiffer could soon be in Malta for a brief stretch in the not so distant future to star in Kenneth Branagh's remake of Agatha Christie's classic novel *Murder on the Orient Express*. The actors will join Daisy Ridley, Michael Pena, Lucy Boynton, Tom Bateman, Derek Jacobi, Leslie Odom Jr. in the thriller, *Variety* reported. Shooting is expected to begin in November in London before moving to Malta.

The casting mirrors the A-list pedigree that characterized Sidney Lumet's 1974 take on Christie's 1934 mystery novel, which starred Albert Finney, Lauren Bacall, Ingrid Bergman and Sean Connery. The plot follows detective Hercule Poirot – who will be portrayed by director Kenneth Branagh - and his efforts to solve a murder case aboard the famous train. **Actress Angelina Jolie was touted to play Mrs Harriet Hubbard**, a passenger deemed a suspect in the murder, but has since turned down the role. The role will now be taken by Michelle Pfeiffer. Christie's book, published in 1934, revolves around a murder on board the famous train. The film follows Belgian detective Poirot who's tasked with solving the case — in which a number of passengers could potentially be the murderer.

Variety reported in 2013 that Fox was developing the project as a remake of Sidney Lumet's 1974 movie, which starred Albert Finney as the genius detective investigating the murder of an American tycoon aboard the train. The all-star cast of suspects included Lauren Bacall, Ingrid Bergman, Jacqueline Bisset, Colin Blakely, Sean Connery, John Gielgud, Anthony Perkins, Vanessa Redgrave and Michael York. "Orient Express" was a commercial success, grossing \$35 million in the U.S. It was also nominated for six Academy Awards, earning Bergman, who portrayed a Swedish missionary, her third Oscar — her first in the supporting category. "Christie's 'Murder' is mysterious, compelling, and unsettling," Branagh said. "I'm honored to have this fantastic group of actors bring these dark materials to life for a new audience."



BEJN TLIET PAJJIZI

MALTA – AWSTRALJA - BRAZIL

Toghgobni l-hajja hiemda li rabbietni
U taghtni t-tul u l-wisgha tat-tagħlim,
Karattru ghagnet u suriti sawret
U mlietni b' hegga biex lil Alla nqim.

Hemm f' rahal ckejken tal-Maltin il-gzejjer,
Bla gmiel u ghana tal-pajjizi kbar,
'l hemm jimrah hsiebi, lejn dik l-art twelidi
Lejn triq taz-Zghawri fis-skiet tal-Munxar.

Toghgobni l-hajja tal-Awstralja kbira
Mnejn twasslet lilna l-hobzna ta' kulljum,
Fejn l-ghixien kisbu bosta qrafa tiegħi
W' isimhom baqa' f' hafna bliet mirqum.

Awtralja mbierka, li ghalkemm imbieghda
U bhal imwarrba f' ta did-dinja t-truf,
Lejha wkoll qalbi thossha wisq migbuda,
"Matilda Tizfen", kant kif hu maghruf.

Toghgobni l-hajja tal-Brazil fuqani
Moghni min Alla b' tal-holqien kull gmiel
Fejn jghixu nies ta' kull kulur u nisel,
Fejn glied u gwerer lanqas biss xi hjiel.

Hawn l-ahjar zmien u l-isbah snin ta' hajti
Ghaddejt intenni l-"IWA" lil Mulej !
Kristu sejjahli biex Hawn nigi nxandru
U mieghu nimxi waqt li jkun ghaddej.

Mons. José Agius BRAZIL
josephagius2010@gmail.com

Petition to protect a National Monument



The Mosta Rotunda

[Mark Micallef](#) [Mosta, Malta](#)

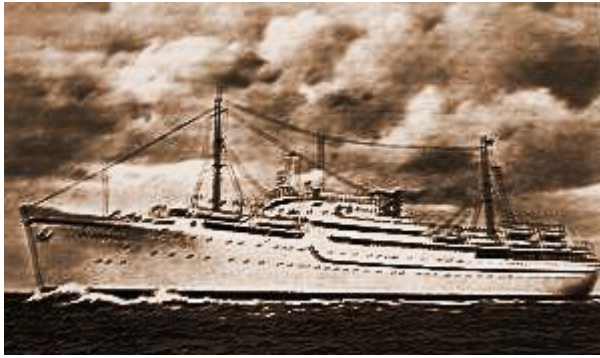
While appreciating the concern shown by Central Government and Local Council about the parking problem in Mosta, I the undersigned do not agree with the plans proposed by Project Malta to build an underground carpark adjacent to the Parish Church. The Rotunda Church must be protected from damage that may be caused by excavation works.

This petition will be delivered to: Project Malta

Please sign the online petition to protect mosta rotunda from a multi story underground car park.

:

https://www.change.org/p/heritage-petition-to-protect-a-national-monument-the-mosta-rotunda/share?utm_medium=email&utm_source=notification&utm_campaign=new_petition_recruit



Flames on the Skaubryn

The story of the Maltese bound for Australia on board the Norvegiann ship Skaubryn occupies a unique place since it was the only occasion when a number of emigrants were for a time in great danger.

This ship was built in 1951 and made six between Malta and Australia from 1952 to her journey in 1958. On that fateful journey the ship carried 169 passengers from Malta while in all she had on her 1,082 passengers with 208 members of the crew. Among the passengers were 200 children and 40 babies. The Maltese had their own chaplain with them, Fr S. Tabone from Kalkara. He was going to visit his two brothers who had left Malta eight years before. The Skaubryn left Grand Harbour on March 22, 1958, and after a short stop at Port Said the ship passed Aden to enter the vastness of the Indian Ocean. That ocean was incredibly calm and the ship continued on her way in a very relaxed atmosphere.



On Monday, March 31, captain Alf Haakon Feste ordered his crew and passengers to meet on deck at 2.30 pm for an emergency drill. Some of the people on board complained at this interference as they preferred their siesta at that time. Once the drill was over some of the passengers went to the hall where a band was playing with a few dancers on the floor. It was very calm and very hot. As darkness fell many went to their cabins for the night's sleep. All one could hear was the regular humming of the ship's engines.

Fr Tabone decided that he too needed a good sleep because he had to be up by 5.00 am. But suddenly the lights in his cabin dimmed and then there was complete darkness. The priest could hear people moving excitedly. His first thought was that some passengers had decided to go on deck to watch the Soviet satellite Sputnik as they had been told that there was a good chance of seeing the satellite from their position in the ocean.

The reason for the commotion was that the engine room was on fire. According to the report given by Captain Feste the fire was caused by a misunderstanding between two members of the crew when they caused oil from an open line in the engine room to spurt on hot exhaust pipes. In a very short time all passengers on board were told which lifeboats they had to take. This efficiency saved the lives of all concerned except for an elderly German who died of a heart attack. The ocean remained mercifully calm.

Luckily the merchant ship City of Sydney happened to be nearby and she picked all the passengers. From her decks the migrants could watch with awe their own Skaubryn being devoured by the flames. It was April 1. The City of Sydney had accommodation for only thirty passengers. Messages for help were sent to any possible vessel that happened to be near area. The luxury liner Roma under captain Nimira, picked the messages and was soon near the City of Sydney. The Roma was on her return journey from Australia to Italy. (16) *Maltese survivors in Aden, April 1958*

Fr Tabone remembered everything in detail. "All of us were taken on board the Italian luxury vessel. The crew fed us and gave us new clothes. Some of the passengers gave their own cabins to those of us who were in need of rest. The Roma took us to Aden where we disembarked on Good Friday. We in Aden for three days and the local authorities treated us very kindly. We were given 10 pounds as pocket money. In Aden we knew that our relatives in Malta and in Australia had been told what had happened to us.



A Maltese bride, Evellina Vassallo, was going to Australia to get married. She lost everything including her cherished wedding dress. After three days we were taken by the Orsova to continue our journey to Australia. When we arrived at Freemantle we were met by the local authorities and by the Maltese Commissioner who stayed with us until we reached Melbourne. The Commissioner offered us 50 pounds each in the name of the Government of Malta. Those who were in the age group between fourteen to twenty were given 25 pounds each and 10 pounds were given to all youngsters under the age of fourteen years". While on the Orsova the survivors received a telegram from Mr A.R. Downer, Minister for Immigration in Canberra. It said:

"On behalf of the Government and the People, I welcome you to Australia. We sympathise with you in your loss and congratulate you on your safe deliverance. In Australia you will find friends anxious to help you settle happily. I look forward personally to greet you on your arrival in Melbourne. 17th April 1958."

More financial backing was forthcoming. The Australian Government gave AUD20,000 in compensation, while philanthropic bodies such as the Australia Red Cross and the St Vincent de Paule Society donated months and clothes. Echoes of the Skaubryn Saga were heard thirty-six years later when another passenger ship met the same fate as the Skaubryn in the Indian Ocean. The Achille Lauro had carried hundreds of Maltese emigrants to Australia in the twenty-five trips she had done in a period of five years between April 1966 and November 1971. In later years the Achille Lauro became a popular luxury liner. On October 7, 1985, she was on the international news when she was hijacked by four Palestinian guerrillas. Nine years later, on November 30, 1994, the same liner was on a cruise on the Indian Ocean when a disastrous fire broke out and was soon out of any control. On board were a thousand tourists. All were saved except three. She burned for two days when she finally went down in an area not far from where the Skaubryn had sank in 1958. (19)

Source: The Safety Valve (1997), author Fr Lawrence E. Attard, Publishers Enterprises Group (PEG) Ltd, ISBN 99909-0-081-7

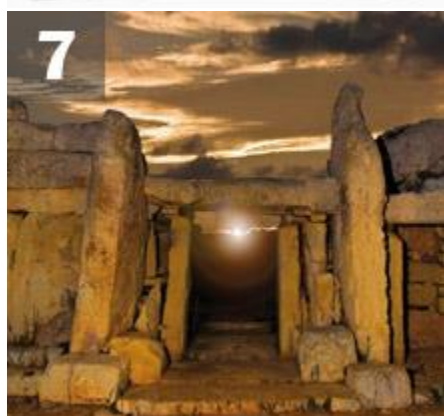


Some of the Maltese male survivors of the MV Skaubryn on the wharf in Aden. The ship caught fire on its way to Australia not long after coming out of the Suez Canal and into the Indian Ocean

SS Skaubryn - 1951-58 - - Number of voyages from Malta to Australia - 4 Number of Maltese Passengers – 2576

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1. Malta was known as 'Melita' by the ancient Greeks and Romans. This means 'the island of honey'. 2. The Pharaoh Hound is the National Dog of Malta. In Maltese, the breed is known as Kelb tal-Fenek 3. The University of Malta is the oldest university in the Commonwealth outside of Great Britain. 4. Malta puts on 75 villages feasts to honour local patron saints between June and September. The feast, or *fešta* in Maltese, is a fabulous event with fireworks, bands and a religious procession. 5. The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem were given control of Malta in 1530 by Charles V of Spain. 6. Grand Master, Jean Parisot de la Valette, who gave Malta's capital its name (Valletta) actually laid the first stone to the city in 1566. 7. The earliest evidence of human settlement in Malta dates back over 7,400 years and the Megalithic temples are the oldest free-standing stone structures in the world. 8. The highest point on the island of Malta is at Ta' Dmejrek, some 253 metres above sea level. 9. The dome of the Mosta Dome, famously surviving a fallen bomb during WWII, is the third largest in Europe.

