

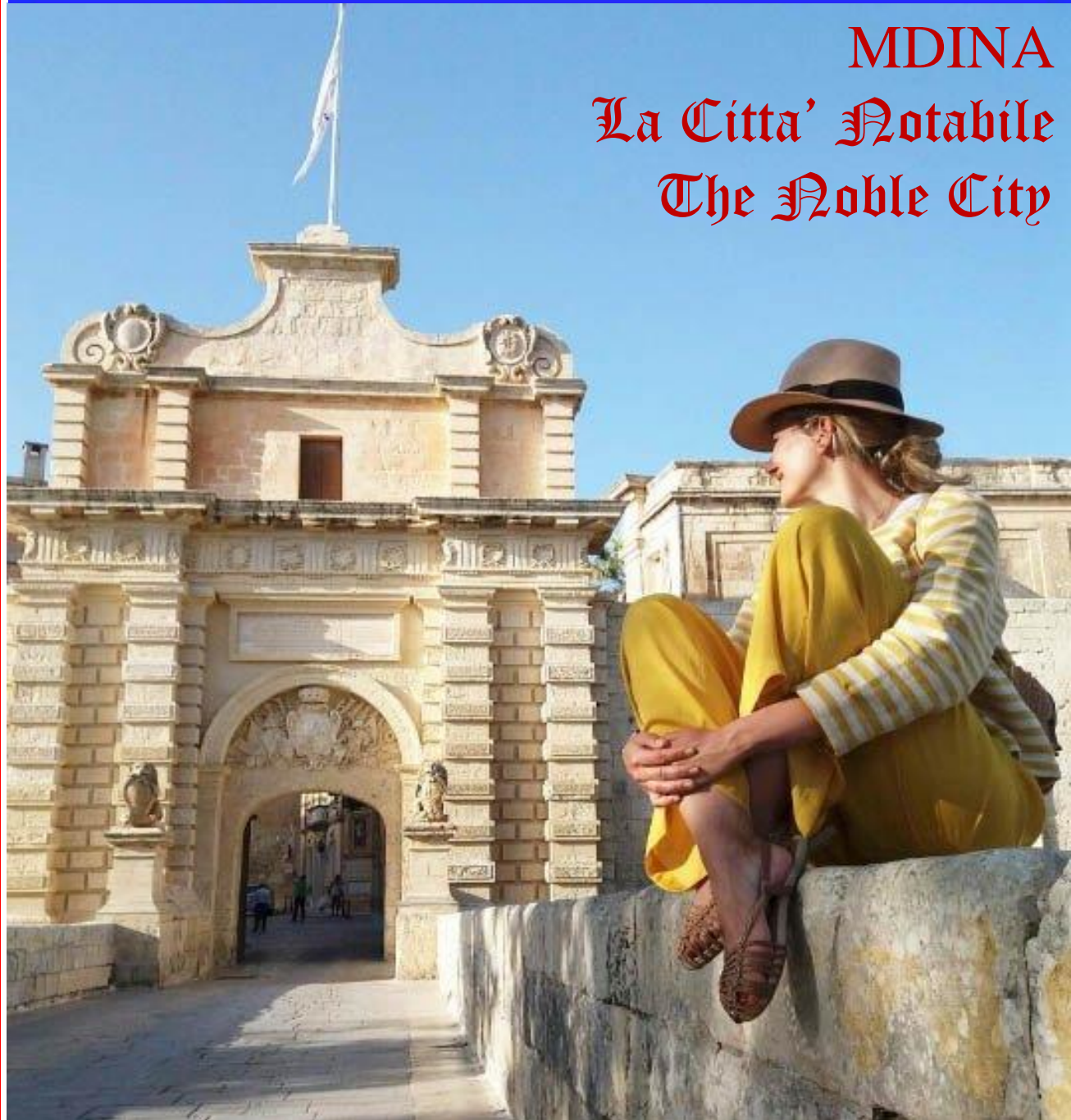


## THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

THE MOTTO - BUILDING BRIDGES NOT WALLS

EDITOR: Frank L. Scicluna OAM CONTACT - Email: [honconsul@live.com.au](mailto:honconsul@live.com.au)



## MDINA *La Citta' Notabile* *The Noble City*



**Next Issue of the  
MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER  
WILL BE A  
SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EDITION**

  
**Peace on Earth  
DO NOT MISS IT**

**MDINA THE  
OLD AND  
SILENT CITY  
OF MALTA**



## MDINA – OLD CAPITAL CITY OF MALTA CITTA' NOTABILE

The history of Mdina traces back more than 4000 years. According to tradition it was here that in 60 A.D. that the Apostle St. Paul is said to have lived after being shipwrecked on the Islands. Furthermore it is said that St. Paul resided inside the grotto know as Fuori le Mura (outside the city walls) now known as St. Paul's Grotto in Rabat. Lamp lit by night and referred to as "the silent city", Mdina is fascinating to visit for its timeless atmosphere as well as its cultural and religious treasures.

Mdina has had different names and titles depending on its rulers and its role but its medieval name describe it best - '*Citta' Notabile*': the noble city. It was home then, as now, to Malta's noble families; some are descendants of the Norman, Sicilian and Spanish overlords who made Mdina their home from the 12th century onwards. Impressive palaces line its narrow, shady streets.

Mdina is one of Europe's finest examples of an ancient walled city and extraordinary in its mix of medieval and baroque architecture. Like nearby Mdina, Rabat played a major role in Malta's past and is a prime source of its cultural heritage.

**This large provincial township was part of the Roman city of Melita, with the sites and archaeological relics found testifying to the town's importance during the Roman period. For many centuries, religious orders have established themselves within the precincts of Rabat and Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians still flourish here in their spacious convents and monasteries, catering for the religious needs of parishioners in their churches. The town is a commercial centre and acts as a market to its large agricultural hinterland. It is also well established on the tourist map due to its archaeological and historical sites.**

*Invitation*

WE ARE PREPARING  
THE SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EDITION  
OF THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER.  
SEND US A MESSAGE, GREETINGS,  
STORIES TO SHARE WITH THOUSANDS  
OF OTHER READERS DURING THE  
UPCOMING FESTIVE SEASON.

Frank Scicluna  
Editor

**MALTESE NEWSLETTER**

**CULTURE  
HISTORY  
HERITAGE  
IDENTITY**







## 11 DIFFERENT CHOIRS PARTICIPATE IN THE GOZO INTERNATIONAL CHOIR FESTIVAL

The second edition of the Gozo International Choir Festival, gets underway this evening, with the first concerts taking place in Ghajnsielem and Xewkija.

Over this weekend, the concerts,

which will feature 11 different choirs will be taking place at 9 different baroque churches around Gozo.

It is well known that the culture of choir singing is still very strong on the island. Almost all churches in Gozo have their own choirs, plus there are also many independent choirs.

Following on from the success of last year, Euro Art Productions (Italy) and Leon Promotions (Malta), have teamed up once again, to present this second edition.

The organisers said that the participating choirs will perform the best songs from their repertoire, including those suited to the festive season.

The Festival is not competitive, with its main intention to bring together various international choirs and let them share their experiences and knowledge in the choir singing sector.

The Festival gets underway this evening, Friday, the 8th of December at two different venues, the Our Lady of Loreto Sanctuary at Ghajnsielem and the St. John the Baptist Rotunda at Xewkija. Both concerts will start at 7pm and both of them will feature performances by 4 different choirs.

The Festival continues on Saturday, the 9th at two other venues, St. Joseph Parish Church at Qala and St. George's Basilica at Victoria. The Qala Concert will start at 7pm and will feature 4 choirs, while the St. George's Basilica Concert will start at 8pm and will feature 3 different choirs.

On Sunday, the 10th, the foreign choirs will participate in Sunday Masses at 4 other venues:

10.00am – The Visitation of Our Lady Basilica – Gharb

10.30am – St. Peter and St. Paul Basilica – Nadur

11.00am – The Nativity of Our Lady Basilica – Xaghra

11.15am – Our Lady of Ta Pinu National Sanctuary

The final night of the Gozo International Choir Festival 2017 will be held on Sunday at the Gozo Cathedral at 7pm and will feature performances by 6 different choirs, followed by presentations of participation certificates by the Minister for Gozo Dr Justyne Caruana.

The Choirs participating are the following:

Aurora Youth Choir – Gozo

Cap Sur La Vie Choir – France

Regina Angelorum Choir – Gozo

Coro Dei Mater Alma – Italy

Laudate Pueri Choir – Gozo

Family Singers Vocal Ensemble Choir – Hungary

Voci Angeliche Choir – Gozo

Parque Pas Choir – France

Piccole Stelle Choir – Gozo

Coro Chianciano – Italy

Hebron Choir – Gozo.

The Festival is being organised in full collaboration with the Ministry of Gozo and the Christmas in Gozo Committee.

The entrance for all mentioned concerts is free of charge.



## IL-MILIED L-ISBAH ZMIEN TAS-SENA



kienu. Anke Scrooge, fil-‘Christmas Carol’ ta’ Charles Dickens, ħass li kellu jifraħ u ried ikun il-Milied li bidillu ħajtu bħal-lejl min-nhar u għamlu bniedem ġdid.

Fil-gzejjer tagħna wkoll dan il-ferħ tħossu u tarah; eżempju mill-aqwa hija l-Kampanja ta’ Karita’ li ssir kull sena wara l-Milied u li nemmen fiha jieħu sehem kulħadd. Dan hu l-Milied, festa ta’ paċi u solidarjeta’ u jalla dawn iż-żewġ ingredjenti jibqgħu magħna s-sena kollha. Importanti li fil-familja nibnu l-presepu għax dan iġibilna mill-ġdid quddiem għajnejna l-ġrajja sabiħa ta’ Betlem li għalkemm kienet waħda mill-iżgħar bliet ta’ Ġuda, isimha ma jithassar qatt għax tat lid-dinja l-feddej tal-ġnus. Cert li fil-gżira t’Għawdex il-kultura tal-presepu hija waħda qawwija u dan mertu tal-Għaqda Hbieb tal-Presepu li twaqqfet f’San Lawrenz f’Ottubru tas-sena 1985 u qatt ma ħarset lura. Minn dak inhar ‘l hawn il-presepu kompli daħal f’kull dar u illum ħafna huma dawk li anke jifthu biebhom beraħ biex in-nies tmur iżżurhom u titgħaxxaq bis-sengħa u l-fantasija tal-presepisti tagħna. Fis-sala ewlenija tal-Ministeru għal Għawdex hemm il-wirja annwali tal-Presepi u fin-Nadur u fix-Xagħra barra l-għadd ta’ presepi li hemm għal wiri hemm wkoll Presepu ħaj biex ma nsemmix Betlem f’Għajnsielem li hi esperjenza unika u indimentikabbli li ħadd ma għandu jitlifha. Jiena nattendi ukoll għan-Novena fil-parroċċa tiegħi u tassew ingarrab ferħ li ma nistax nesprimih bil-pinna għax huwa ferħ qaddis li ma tagħtihx id-dinja u ninsab lest biex issa nieħu sehem fil-purċissjoni bil-Bambin li ta’ kull sena jagħmlu l-membri tal-Museum lejliet il-Milied qabel il-quddies ta’ nofs il-lejl li għaliha wkoll inkun minn tal-ewwel mal-familja tiegħi. Din is-sena wara li tispicċa l-quddies ta’ nofs il-lejl fil-Bażilka ta’ San Gorg, sa jsir kuncert tal-Milied minn ‘D Capitals’ taħt id-direzzjoni ta’ Mro George Apap; ejjew kompli ddevertu magħna wara l-funzjoni tal-knisja fil-pjazza ta’ quddiem il-knisja! Bla dubju t-toroq imzejna u r-rigali u l-ħelu tajjeb hemm posthom ukoll fil-Milied. Din is-sena nitlobkom iżżuru l-Gonna Pubbliċi ta’ Villa Rundle fil-Victoria hekk kif jibda jroxx id-dlam għax tassew fihom x’tara; anke Triq ir-Repubblika bħas-soltu tinsab mzejna kif imiss! Lejliet il-Milied jispikka wkoll il-Pageant spettakulari tal-Milied f’San Lawrenz! Imma l-ikbar rigal tibqa’ dejjem it-tarbija divina! Nawguralkom Milied hieni u qaddis!

**Kav Joe M Attard Victoria Għawdex**



## MEGHAN MARKLE 'REALLY LOVES MALTA'

Bay News gozo, lovemalta, malta,

Prince Harry's fiancée has been revealed as a massive fan of Malta – and even likes pastizzi. Meghan Markle also has personal connections

with the island as her great-great-grandmother Mary was born in Malta in 1862.

Meghan spent time in the Maltese Islands in 2015 and revealed she 'really loved it'.

She visited Mdina, Valletta and Gozo during her stay, which included a photoshoot for Elle magazine.

At the time, she said: 'Coming to Malta has been really important to me because my great-great-grandmother lived here, so we've been trying to trace the ancestry.'

'Before I came, people were telling me, 'When you go to Malta, everyone will look like you,' and I started to say, 'Oh my gosh I do sort of blend in,' and it's the loveliest feeling.'

'The people have been so kind, the food is amazing and the culture. I can't wait to come back, it's too short a time. 'Everything is picturesque. It is a great destination, really special.'

She added: 'In Gozo I loved the fresh goat's milk cheeses, particularly the pickled ones with the black pepper on them.'

'I'm about to have the spaghetti with rabbit, which I've been waiting to try. 'This morning, for breakfast, I tried the pastizzi with peas and ricotta. Oh my goodness they're delicious!'

'So my suitcase will be filled with all sorts of Maltese treats.'

It was confirmed that Harry and Meghan are engaged on Monday morning.

In a tweet, palace officials said: 'The Prince of Wales is delighted to announce the engagement of Prince Harry to Ms Meghan Markle. The statement read: 'The wedding will take place in Spring 2018. Further details about the wedding day will be announced in due course.'

Speculation about a royal engagement had been growing in recent months, after Suits star Meghan, 35, was pictured visiting Harry, 32, at Kensington Palace in London.

## MONS.JOE GRECH

ISQOF TA' SANDHURST – VICTORIA  
WARA MEWTU FIT-28 TA' DICEMBRU 2010

Bniedem qaddis kien il-Qassis - Hadem bil-bzulija,  
b'herqa u w'irgulija  
Is-sacerdot wera l-gherf tieghu. - Veru Alla kien  
mieghu.

Id-doni li kellu dal-bniedem - Gharfuhom il-kbarat  
U gie onorat . B' titlu ta' responsabilita' kbira  
W'huma hatruh U r-raghaj ta' Sandhurst ghamluh.

Ghaddew is-snin Ta' xoghol li jghaggeb riedu wkoll  
Madwar id-dinja sar mgharuf - Kulhadd ihobbu  
Kulhadd iridu u jigu jisimuh.

U Alla riedu wkoll..... fl'eta ta' tnejn u sittin sena  
Ghajjatlu wara marda ta' ftit snin

B'sobgha kbira, w'qalb imnikkta l-folla marret warajh Titlob u tibki t-telfa tieghu.  
lill-isqof Joe Grech zgur ma ninsewhx Maria Catania (Melbourne)





THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 166 MAY 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER  
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

THE EDITOR: FRANK L. SCICLUNA  
CONTACT: franciscicluna@gmail.com

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Hon Farrugia in Sydney  
Village of Modica  
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**The Flag of the Order of Malta.  
Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of  
St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta**

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 168 June 2017

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7 June Riots  
Boomerang  
Teatru Rjali  
Octopus Stew  
Malta Catacombs  
Statue of a  
Grandmaster

Our readers  
are from all over  
the world

The Gerdjola is located in Senglea, perched on the bastion with fantastic panoramic views over Marsa, Valletta, Grand Harbour and Port St. Angelo

Gerdjola Gardens in Senglea's other spectacular views of the Grand Harbour

The gardens were planted by Grandmaster Du La Rochelle in 1693 with a lovely tower built on the tip of the bastion. The grand tower 'Gerdjola' has various rooms, including an art gallery and the Grand Master's residence, representing grandeur and splendour.

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TRADITIONAL MALTESE FESTIVAL  
**L-IMNARJA**  
28-29 JUNE

Buckett Gardens - Dingle

Ghana's Zifa  
Wija tal-Shejma  
Diel Tradizzjonali  
Wija Agnola  
Fenekka u Nid

La Isla Isola  
To Malta  
with Love  
St. Gregory's  
Procession  
Canada Day  
St. Mary  
Chapel  
Bir Miftah  
Maltese  
Mrs. Bachel  
Your Opinion  
Counts  
Maltese  
ID Card  
L-Taxi Malti  
Order of  
Malta in  
Ireland  
and much more  
Happy  
reading

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 187 October 2017

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LACE MAKING IS ONE OF MALTA'S MOST PRECIOUS TRADITIONS. ORIGINALLY ASSOCIATED WITH NOBILITY, IT IS NOW CONSIDERED A HIGHLY VALUED COMMODITY.

**BIZZILLA - LACE-MAKING IN MALTA**

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 195 November 2017

**MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER**  
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L. Scicluna CAN JP Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

**Il-Bewsa tan-Nanna**

Waqt li Toninu  
kien qiegħed jaqra  
B'qattus ma genbu  
U kieb daqs naqra  
Dahlet in-nanna nkiss inkiss  
U tatu bewsa, kif kien imiss

WE STILL LOVE MALTA

When a Maltese parliamentarian visited Australia, an elderly lady, a grandmother, approached her with tears in her eyes, and begged her: "When you go back to Malta, please tell that we still love Malta. Tell them that we never stopped loving our country. We can't come back because our children and grandchildren live here." This grandmother's story is very common in Australia among the many Maltese who settled in Australia and other countries.

Poesia rikbula  
Profa. A. Gattani  
Karmistat

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 194 November 2017

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

**Mgr. Charles J. Scicluna  
Archbishop of Malta**

Maltese e-Newsletter 165 May 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER  
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**HISTORY OF MALTESE GHANA**

Ghana is traditional Maltese folk singing. The type of singing has a number of different variations, e.g. 'Ghana tal-Farf', where the singer recounts a story in verses that relate to a tragic past event. Another genre is 'Ghana spirtu prout', but singers tell out or mouth other with sharp and witty remarks as one sings out and the other responds with spontaneous thoughts out loud, and 'Ghana fil-Għajr' where the stories are sung in an extremely high, rapid-fire tempo, similar to a flamenco folk song - this singing is also known as 'Ghana tal-Farf'.

Maltese folk singing known as 'Ghana'

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES LIVING IN MALTA AND ABROAD

Keep on sending us your contributions, emails, stories and comments to keep this magazine alive.

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 171 June 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER  
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

THE EDITOR: FRANK L. SCICLUNA  
CONTACT: franciscicluna@gmail.com

**Cisk Beer**  
What do you have to say

**A STORY OF A MALTESE FARMER  
Maltese in Canada**  
Lazzaretto Hospital  
Għajn tal-Hasselin  
THE ANZACS

and much MORE...

Our grandparents used to say that once in your life you need a lawyer, a policeman or a doctor but every day, three times a day, you need a farmer

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 178 July 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER  
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THIS EDITION IS DEDICATED TO THE PRESIDENT OF ALL MALTESE: THOSE LIVING ON THE ISLANDS AND THOSE LIVING ABROAD

**PRESIDENT OF MALTA  
H.E. MARIE LOUISE COLEIRO-PRECA  
WE ARE MALTESE FIRST AND FOREMOST**

## PAST ISSUES OF THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

## Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – Anxiety Disorder

by Dr. Victor Chircop-Sullivan



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition and it is an extremely debilitating condition that can occur after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm was threatened or occurred. Traumatic events that can trigger PTSD include violent personal assaults such as rape or mugging, natural or manmade disasters, car accidents or military combat.

Most people with PTSD try to avoid any reminders or thoughts of the ordeal. Despite this avoidant behaviour many people with PTSD repeatedly re-experience the ordeal in the form of flashback episodes, memories, nightmares or frightening thoughts, especially when they are exposed to events or objects reminiscent of trauma. Symptoms of PTSD also include emotional numbness and deep sleep disturbances including insomnia, depression and irritability or outbursts of anger. Feelings of intense guilt are also common, PTSD is diagnosed only if these symptoms last more than one month.

Fortunately, through research supported by the Institute of Mental Health effective treatments have been developed to help people with PTSD.

About 4% of the population will experience symptoms of PTSD in a given year.

### Symptoms

PTSD symptoms are generally grouped into four types: intrusive memories, avoidance, negative changes in thinking and mood and changes in physical and emotional reactions. Symptoms can vary over time or vary from person to person.

### When Does it Happen

PTSD can develop at any age, including childhood and people who had a traumatic experience in their lives and returned service people who were in the front line during wars or conflicts.

Symptoms of PTSD typically begin within three months following a traumatic event, although occasionally. Some people recover within six months while others may suffer much longer.

### Can People with PTSD also have other Physical or Emotional Illnesses

People with PTSD can also have other psychological difficulties, particularly depression, substance abuse or another anxiety disorder. The likelihood of treatment success is increased when these other conditions are appropriately diagnosed and treated as well.

### Avoidance

Symptoms of avoidance may include, Trying to avoid thinking or talking about the traumatic events, avoiding places, activities or people that remind you of the traumatic events

### Treatments available for PTSD

Treatment for PTSD includes cognitive-behaviour therapy, group psychotherapy and medications (including anti-depressants). Various forms of exposure therapy such as systematic desensitisation and imaginal flooding have all been used with PTSD patients. Exposure treatment for PTSD involves repeated reliving of the trauma under controlled conditions with the aim of facilitating the processing of the trauma.

### Seeking help

If you have disturbing thoughts and feelings about a traumatic event for more than one month, if they are severe, or if you feel you're having trouble getting your life back under control, talk to your doctor or mental health professional. Getting treatment as soon as possible can help prevent PTSD symptoms from getting worse.

**SEND A MESSAGE TO YOUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS WHEREVER THEY ARE**

**THIS JOURNAL TRAVELS AFAR**



## KRISTU TAL-BAHHARA - CHRIST OF THE SAILORS

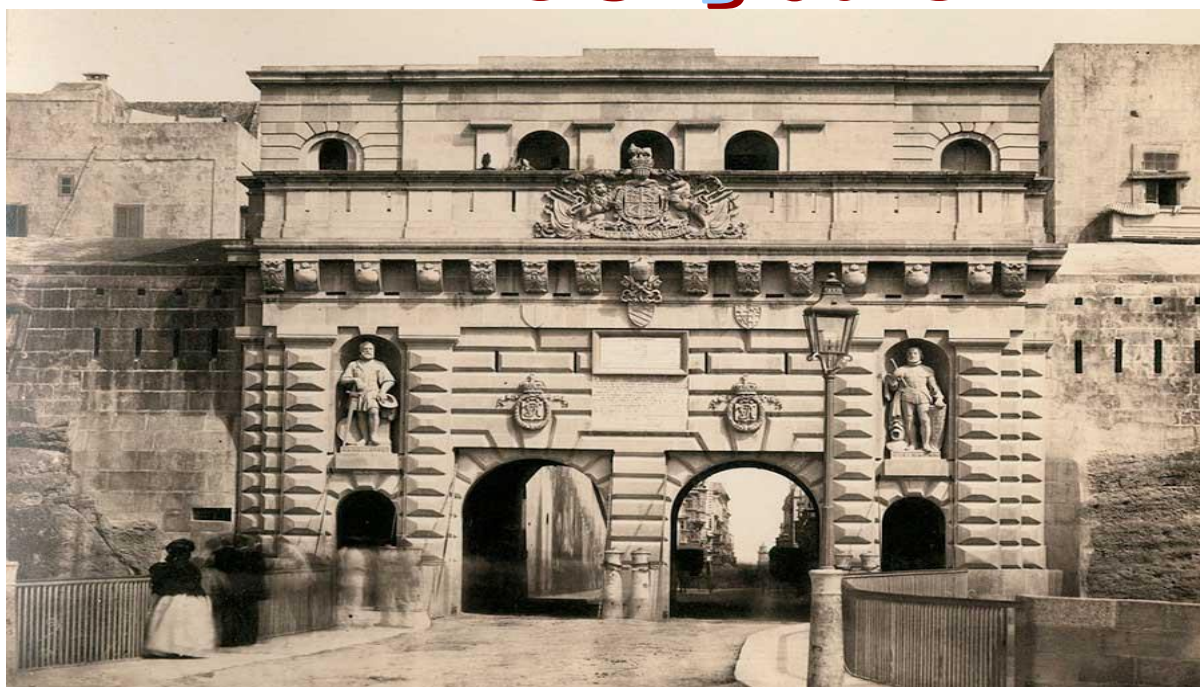
Kristu tal-Bahhara (English: *Christ of the Sailors*) is an underwater statue of [Jesus Christ](#) two



kilometers off the coast of [Malta](#). It was made by Maltese sculptor Alfred Camilleri Cauchi from concrete covered fiberglass. Cauchi was commissioned to perform this work by a committee of divers led by Raniero Borg to honor the visit of St Pope John Paul II to Malta in 1990. The statue is modeled on the bronze [Christ of the Abyss](#) at San Fruttuoso, Italy and is one of many copies in locations around the world.

The statue was originally sunk near [St. Paul's Islands](#) in 1990. After 10 years the statue was moved from St. Paul's Bay to [Qawra](#) point because of deteriorating visibility in the water and a decline in divers visiting the site. The statue lies in 35 metres of water and is close to the wreck of the MV *Imperial Eagle*, one of the ferryboats connecting Malta and Gozo, is also a diving attraction.

## VALLETA - The City Gate



Technically, the first ever 'City gate' wasn't actually a gate – it was in fact a passageway dug into the fortifications. However between 1566 and 1569 Francesco Laparelli de Carotona built a gateway known as *Porta San Giorgio*. This was replaced in 1632 by Tommaso Dingli's design which involved a central arch with two smaller ones at each side, along with a wooden drawbridge going across what is known as 'the ditch'.

During the British rule this design was once again changed, this time by Col. Thompson in 1853. This time the entrance featured two large arches along with two small ones on each side. The gate also featured two statues, one of Grandmaster Jean De La Vallette, the valiant



man responsible for winning the Great Siege and building the capital, and the other was Grandmaster L'Isle Adam – the first Grandmaster of Malta.

This gate, known as Porta Reali or King's Gate was later replaced by the 1964 City Gate which

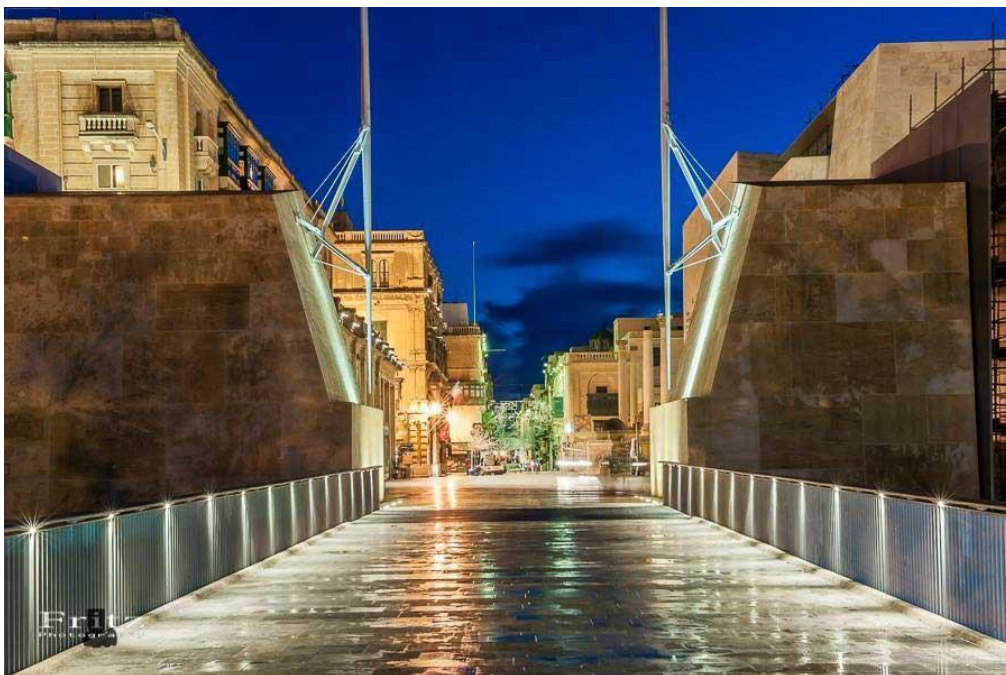


was part of the Italian Modernist movement. The 1964 gate was part of a large scale project to redesign Valletta's entrance along with the Royal Opera House. This project however was never finalised due to public displeasure.

It was therefore in 2011 that Renzo Piano's designs were approved.

His plan for the entrance was one of reorganisation with a return to the initial entrance's style. Over the years the bridge into Valletta had come to resemble a normal passageway rather than an actual bridge, for this reason Renzo Piano's design worked at recreating the feeling of crossing a bridge, imitating the 1633 Dingli design. Moreover, the plans serve to reinstate the original feeling of depth as you walk into the city. This was a nod to the fortification's main purpose – that of protection and strength. Image Source: Fritz photography

The open air aspect of the entrance meant that the above road could no longer be used, the road was connected with the entrance to the capital through the 2 side staircases, similar to the King's gate's design. This also allowed for the fortifications to become more visible – giving them primary



attention, whilst also acting as a memory of an older design.

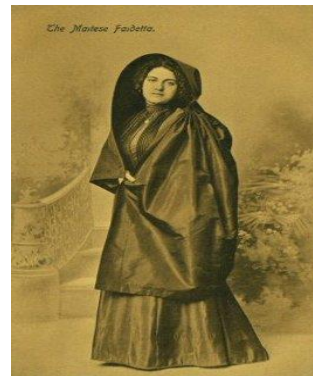
In short – the new entrance to Valletta is in many ways a look back at the original function of the entrance along with the original design. The entrance looks much like a passageway cut into the fortifications, just like the original gateway, and the

many features hinting at older times serve to act as a reminder that our history and culture will follow us wherever we go.

## MALTESE TRADITIONAL HEAD-DRESS - Għonnella

*The Maltese "Faldetta", now seen only in vintage photographs.*

The **għonnella**, pronounced "awe-ne-l-la" (pl. *għonnielen*, pronounced "awe-nee-lan"), sometimes referred to as a **Faldetta**, was a form of women's head dress and shawl, or hooded cloak, unique to the Mediterranean islands of Malta and Gozo. In the dialects of the south-east of Malta it was referred to as *ċulqana* while in the dialect of Għargħur it was referred to as *stamijna*. It was generally made of cotton or silk, and usually black or some other dark colour, although from the sixteenth century onwards, noble women and women from wealthier households frequently wore white or brightly coloured *għonnielen*. The *għonnella* covered the head, and framed but did not cover the face. The upper part of the *għonnella* was starched quite stiffly, and given a broad, rounded frame, formed by means of a board, cane, or whalebone. This gave the *għonnella* a mysterious but alluring, sail-like appearance. From a practical perspective, this broad bonnet captured much needed cooling breezes during the hot Maltese summer. On cooler days, the wearer could wrap the *għonnella* around her face more tightly, by making a slight adjustment. The lower part of the *għonnella* could be worn loosely draped around the wearer's bodice and hips, or more tightly wrapped in the case of inclement weather. It would typically fall to mid-calf length. While walking, the wearer would hold one or both sides of the *għonnella* clasped in her right hand. In the south-eastern part of Malta, the *għonnella* was called *ċulqana*, while in the Għargħur dialect it was referred to as *stamijna*.



### Maltese Folklore

- This is what Maltese folklore is all about, exploring the history, literature, folktales, old wives tales, children's rhymes and games, traditional medicine, nicknames, birth and death rituals, feasts, and old customs from Malta and Gozo.

*Josephine Ebejer Grech*

Il-Liġo Jamrun  
San Ġorġ Preca B.J.L.  
Malta

## The stuff that legends are made of

The word 'legend' is one of those words which unfortunately has for many in today's fame-obsessed age lost its original exotic meaning.

As a child, on hearing this word, I would immediately get a dreamy look in my eyes as castles, ogres, dwarves and other mythical creatures sprang to mind. I know my mind was colonised with these images

from British lore but these were the only legends I could find to read at the time.

Fortunately, we grew up in a story-telling community which in the summer evenings used to meet outside our homes among the adults' chairs and the children's adventurous play acting. There was one particular woman who had such a natural gift for narrating stories that silence would fall since all listeners felt pity for the Mosta bride, was petrified in the darkness of Hassan's cave, and together went on other exciting exploits.

These stories raised a strange sense of nostalgia for things we had not really experienced but which seemed thrilling enough to make us want them to be true. It was with the same yearning that I picked up Joseph Camilleri's *Gabra ta' Legġendi*, which promised to take me back not only to these tales' past but also to my innocent childhood days.

Legends are obviously stories which, according to folklore expert Guze Cassar Pullicino, spring from people's fantasy. It is not important whether these legends have in reality happened or not. What is important is these narratives are connected with a situation or character which is real. In fact, this is what distinguishes legends from fables.

Although fables too are entirely made up, they are not connected with reality, although they reflect it. Such anecdotes call for a suspension of belief and what is interesting about them is the creative imagination involved in spinning a stirring tale. Many legends have in fact come down through generations by word of mouth as they were retold by adults to the young ones. Such 'loose' repetition has indeed led to variations on the original stories but this too is of interest as it divulges how people's outlook on life changes through the ages.



In fact, such legends present a good anthropological study of any society as at their core they have the main people's beliefs and fears. Camilleri's book is divided into various parts which present a cross-section of the Maltese psyche. Some of the stories deal with the roots of the Maltese population which give very imaginative possibilities of how the first people came to these islands. According to Camilleri, there are stories stemming from Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco that have left great influence on the Maltese legends, which might indicate that our origins can be traced back to any of these countries. Moreover, the importance of religion for these islands is evident in the many sections dedicated to stories which tend to revolve either around statues representing Christ, Our Lady and other saints.

Obviously, there could not but be a whole batch of anecdotes dedicated to St Paul and the fact that he brought the Roman Catholic religion to our shores. Another section deals with stories connected to the historical figure of Count Roger and his famous flag which many believe inspired the Maltese flag. It is understandable that since Malta is an island, many of these tales also deal with the sea. It is interesting that some stories tend to change even from village to village and that some tend to be localised to particular villages rather than connected with general Maltese history. What is important is that from each legend a moral message is derived. It is crucial that such books are published as they collect stories which would otherwise be lost to future generations. Young children will enjoy listening and eventually reading these stories which present to them an overview of their ancestors and how they viewed life. Unfortunately, in our fast paced cynical times the tendency to overlook such stories as a waste of time would be a pity as we lose touch with where we came from and that which has made us who we are as Maltese.



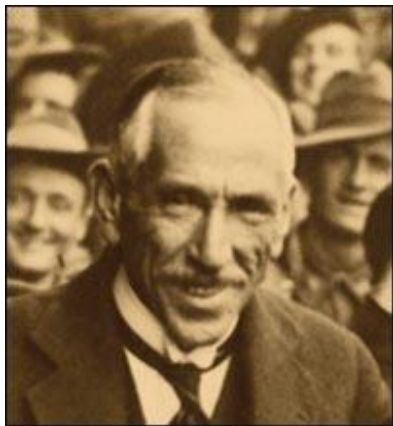
**The Legend of tal-Maqluba-** Another interesting legend in Malta which I was recently told is that of tal-Maqluba. The legend states that once the area of tal-Maqluba, just south of the Maltese village of Qrendi, there once was an evil village. The people were so bad that God punished them by opening the ground and the whole village was swallowed by the Earth. The opening in the ground stopped exactly in front of a chapel, which is still present just by the edge of this enormous hole. The crater is 50 meters in circumference and around 40 meters deep.

**Il-GawGaw** - In the past, December 24th was considered a most unfavorable day for birth.

According to a superstitious belief that lingered among the Maltese up until the end of the 19th Century. Any person born on Christmas Eve was transformed into a ghost called "il-GawGaw". On that specific night, in the form of a "Gawgaw", they wandered about frightening people. Children were told that if they misbehaved, the "Gawgaw" would kidnap them and take them far far away to a distant land, where they would die of hunger and loneliness. Towards dawn the persons transformed in a "Gawgaw" returned home exhausted. By the time they woke up in the morning they would have resumed their human form, quite unaware of their nocturnal peregrinations. The remedy against this transformation consisted of inducing the sufferer to sit up all night and to count the holes of a sieve from eleven o'clock at night to the following Christmas morning.

*San Ġużepp  
Fil-Lejl tal-Milied*  
Inizjattiva ta' Deer Publications  
u Natalis Notabilis

Aghitu donazzjoni ta' 3 euro jew aktar  
lil **ALCS MALTA**  
u tinghataw dan il-ktejjel  
li fih rakkont ta' Andrew Borg,  
il-kotba ssibuhom fuq diversi stands fosthom f'dak  
tad-Deer Publications,  
fi Triq Doni (kantuniera mal-kappella ta' Duna)  
mill-Hamis 7 ta' Diċembru sat-Thieta 12 ta' Diċembru.



## HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF MALTESE REFUGEES IN 1916

*William (Billy) Morris Hughes, Prime Minister of Australia 1915–23*

A little known vignette of Australian history, with some remarkable parallels to recent events, happened way back in 1916.

Setting off in that year in a French mail boat, the *Gange*, were 214 Maltese men would-be migrants to Australia. At the time, as citizens of Malta, they were also British subjects. They had every reason to expect that they would be admitted.

However, on arrival in Australia after a boat journey of five weeks, they found the political climate less than welcoming. The then prime minister, Billy Hughes, was campaigning in favour of the conscription referendum. He was worried that the arrival of this boatload of migrants would fuel the fears of anti-conscriptionists, that while fighting a war overseas their jobs would be taken by such migrants. The Australian Workers Union of the time described the Maltese as "the black menace".



Accordingly, the Australian authorities invoked Section 3(a) of the Immigration (Restriction) Act. That section provided that: "Any person who, when asked to do so by an officer, fails to write out at dictation and sign in the presence of the officer a passage of 50 words in length in a European language directed by the officer is a prohibited immigrant. (Left) Map of Australia and New Caledonia

The Maltese migrants, who were by then detained under armed guard, were promptly, given a test in the Dutch

language - and failed. They were shipped off to the Pacific Island of Noumea.

The abolition of the test came about through a revamping of the Immigration Act in 1958. There was bipartisan support for the test's abolition and it was dropped without controversy from the new Migration Act of 1958. Its abolition reflected the new awareness on the part of Australia's leaders that the post-Second World War world was very different to that which preceded it. The emerging new outlook recognized that Australia could not underrate its geographic position in Asia. The outlook culminated in the formal abolition of racial criterion in immigration policy in 1973, a principled position which has been maintained by all governments since.

The parallel so far with Australia's reaction to the arrival of a fresh wave of immigrants arriving by boat more than 80 years later suggests little has changed. But public outcry even during the turmoil of World War I resulted in the eventual return of the Maltese men to Australia. One of them, Emmanuel Attard, enlisted in two world wars, and like many migrants before and after him contributed to the development of what has become a successful multicultural community.

**The migration test provision replaced laws expressly prohibiting by reference to race, such a migration by refs the Victorian 1855 anti-Chinese laws. Racism was also entrenched in the Constitution, which once provided that the reckoning of the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth or of a state shouldn't include Aboriginal natives.**



# Maltese Traditions: Il-Quċċija

Written by Sabine Jung on 3

March 2015



Today I'll be sharing with you one of the many interesting Maltese traditions that I have learnt about during my time in Malta, known as il-quċċija. This tradition has been practised in Malta since the 18th century, and remains as popular today as it was when it first started out. The idea behind this tradition is to predict a baby's future career or lifestyle.

Il-quċċija is normally done at the baby's first birthday party when the baby's parents invite close family and friends to their home to celebrate the occasion. When it is time for the quċċija, a number of objects are placed a few metres away from the baby, and the baby is encouraged by all those present to crawl over to the objects and choose one. All the objects placed there for the child to pick represent a different career or lifestyle, and the first object picked up by the child is said to be predictive of their future. Some of the objects used in the quċċija today are similar to the ones used when the tradition first started out. However, most of the objects used nowadays reflect more modern careers, such as careers in I.T. In the past, boys used to be presented with different objects to girls, reflecting the more traditional ideas regarding gender and career. For example, boys would be presented with traditional tools, whereas girls would be presented with cooking utensils or crocs. Nowadays, boys and girls are generally presented with the same objects, reflecting a change in society's views of gender and career as well as a change in parents' career aspirations for their children. Some of the objects typically used for the quċċija, together with the careers they represent are as follows:

- **Stethoscope – Doctor**
- **Geometry instrument – Architect**
- **Calculator – Accountant**
- **Bible or rosary beads – Priest or nun**
- **Computer mouse – Career in I.T.**
- **Paintbrush – Artist**
- **Book – Author or journalist**
- **Credit card – Banker**
- **Money – Successful business person**
- **Kitchen utensil – Chef**

## Italian ricotta and Maltese irkotta - are they the same?

*Smooth and creamy ricotta is a versatile ingredient that can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes or can be enjoyed as a tasty snack simply spread on bread.*



The creamy Italian ricotta differs from the Maltese variety in cooking processes

### **Rachel Zammit Cutajar**

Foodies will notice a difference between Italian ricotta and the Maltese made irkotta, and this boils down to the cooking methods.

The manufacturing process of the Maltese irkotta involves the cooking of milk, rather than of milk whey, with the addition of calcium chloride (a type of salt) to form a curd.

Italian ricotta, on the other hand, is actually a by-product of cheese making, using the milk whey left over from cheese production. Though

most of the milk protein is removed when cheese is made - mainly casein - some remains in the whey - mostly albumin. The whey is left to become more acidic for 12 to 24 hours and is then heated to near boiling. The combination of the cheese acid and the high temperatures form a fine curd, which, once cooled, is sieved through a fine cloth. The creamy curds are white and sweet in taste, though are highly perishable and must be consumed immediately.

Ricotta, whether the original Italian version or the Maltese irkotta, is used in a number of savoury dishes including ravioli, lasagne or simply spread on bread with a drizzle of olive oil for a light snack as it contains significantly less fat than other cheeses at just 13%. The same as mascarpone, ricotta is a vital ingredient in many Italian desserts such as cheesecake, cannoli and cassatella siciliana.

## **NOSTALGIA - PROXY BRIDES FROM MALTA IN THE 1950'S AND '60'S**



*Tonina and Ted Farrugia on their wedding day.*

**Boatloads of 'proxy brides' brought a civilising balance to postwar Australia, writes Sonia Harford.**

TONINA FARRUGIA remembers her wedding day as "weird" because on her big day, a man she didn't wish to marry joined her at the altar, and the real groom didn't show up at all. Ted Farrugia was far away in Australia, while Tonina got married in Malta.

Tonina was one of thousands of young women who came to be known as "proxy brides" in the 1950s and '60s. Demand for wives was so great among postwar migrants in Australia that the men sent home urgent letters of proposal to childhood friends, sisters' friends,

any young women they could contact.

After World War II, the influx of men from Italy, Greece and Malta arriving to labour on major projects in Australia created an imbalance, with too few women. Public opinion at the time feared the men might become "an unruly force without the tempering influence of women", according to ***By Proxy***, a study of migrant brides by Susi Bella Wardrop.

So the search for a mate gathered strength through a formal, pragmatic scheme, organised by the Catholic Church, and accepted by the Australian government. In a defining decade for Australia, and particularly Victoria, huge transport ships brought young women from all over southern Europe to balance the male migrants. It was unthinkable for young women like Tonina to travel alone, unwed. Respect lay in being married.

The proxy came in the form of a ceremony, in which another village man would stand in for the groom, as a priest performed the wedding in his absence. Ring on finger, the girl would then board a ship bound for Australia as a married woman, due to be collected by her husband at journey's end.

Australian newspapers welcomed the exotic female fleet with colourful headlines and photographs. "Proxy grooms storm a bride ship" summarised a scene of men crowding onto a pier and actually clambering up the ship's hull to claim their bride, as shy girls looked down from an upper deck.

Now, after 52 years of marriage, Tonina considers herself lucky to have migrated as a teenage bride to a country she has loved since her first glimpse of Station Pier. Her union was a success, as were many others. Tomorrow, at a reunion organised by the Immigration Museum, many Melbourne couples like the Farrugias, who married at a distance, will share their stories.

Tonina was just 16 when she took a huge leap of faith in accepting Ted's proposal. She'd known him as a childhood friend in her village of Floriana but hadn't seen him for two years. They'd corresponded a little, then he outlined an ambitious plan: marriage and migration. For a girl who'd never left home, she was surprisingly open to the future. "Floriana was so small - in one day you could walk around it. My mother was sick and died when I was 11." Tonina's father remarried but she and her stepmother didn't get on, so in 1956, she told her father her plans and approached the church for an odd sort of wedding on April 2.

"Ted's uncle had to stand in for him, and my uncle took my father's place, as my father was shy about this role. Then Ted's uncle answered all the questions in church, with the priest addressing him by Ted's name. I didn't even have a long dress, and when I went home my father had a small party with a little cake. I felt funny because after everyone had gone it was like any other day. But I didn't have to wait long."



Tonina was married on a Monday and left for Australia the following Sunday. Taking a trunk filled with sheets, towels, clothes, crockery, pots and bedding - all that she'd need to make a home as a wife - she went down to the Grand Harbour to board the ship, the Arosa Kulm, and the enormity of her decision hit home. "I was so upset to leave the family, I didn't want to say goodbye," she recalls.

On board, crammed into a dormitory with about a dozen women and children, she was constantly sick during the six-week journey. Port Said, Colombo, Fremantle - she hardly noticed where they stopped en route to Melbourne. She knew no one, but a kind woman brought her food, and she made friends with five other proxy brides.

Dark stories swirled among women on the bride ships as many expected the worst. Some had married men they'd never met. From Australia, men sent photographs, sometimes substituting one of a more handsome brother. Will he like me, the women asked themselves. Will he look like the photo, and is the photo really him?

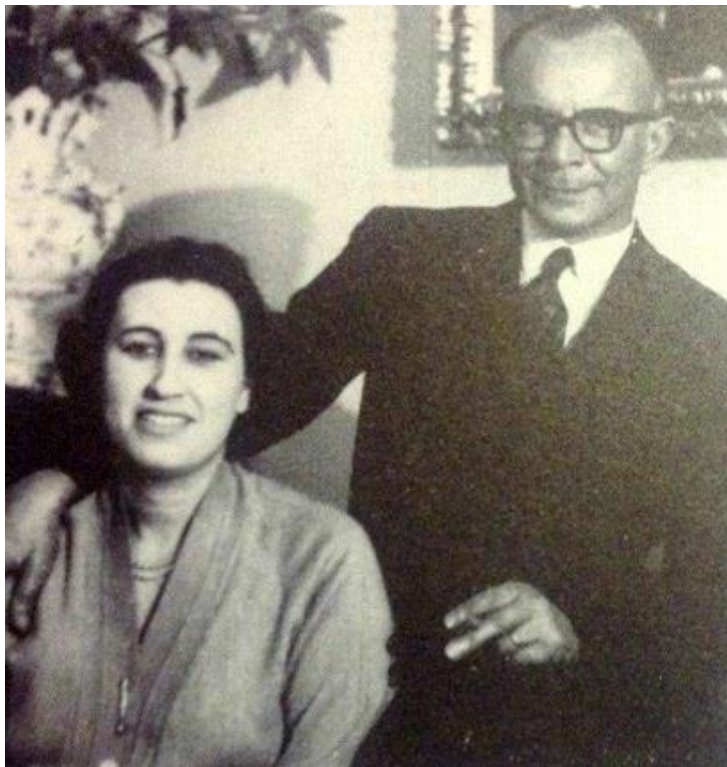
Some refused to leave the ship, some fell in love on board ship. For most there was a safety net; if a woman was miserable, she could have the marriage annulled before it was consummated.

The compromises were there at the outset - no courting, no wedding gown, no feast; perhaps a small party with a new husband's family on arrival, then straight into wifely duties, setting up house, bearing children, farm or factory work, and making a life in Coburg, Carlton, Lalor and other places where migrants gathered. Yet in the *By Proxy* study at least, very few marriages ended in divorce.

In Australia, there was criticism from those who viewed the proxy bride system as somehow backward, akin to an arranged marriage. "Even though it's a patriarchal society, women had a very influential role. They were mother figures for men, advising and supporting them. The largely all-male population had been very unhealthy.

"I've come across letters from men to their mothers, who write: 'I miss you dearly'. Aunts, sisters and cousins had all been involved in bringing them up as children in the village." Tonina says she was never disappointed. Half a century of marriage, two children and a grandson are testament to a contented life.

**In her home, there's even a nod to the conventional wedding photo on most people's mantelpieces. In one frame, teenage Tonina is pictured in an elaborate wedding dress she borrowed for a photo shoot once she'd reached Australia. Posing with Ted, the couple is complete. Dressing up for the day, she choreographed the wedding she'd never had.**



### IL-HAJJA

**Tfajla, jien sibtek, Fil-ghaxqa  
ta' zghozitek, Sibtek ferrieha,  
Sibtek sabiha... Kemm sbejha  
fuq rasek, ix-xuxa sewdiena!  
Kemm sbejha fil-harsa Il-  
lehha qalbiena...**

**.U l-qalb illi raqdet fin-nghas  
ta '-apatija, qed terga tqum  
bil-lehha tas-sbuhija.**

**U illum li nafek sew.. U snin  
ghaddew.. Ha jkun ix-xaghar  
bajdani...Ha tkun il-kisra tal-  
ghajnejn ghajjiena. Irridek  
hdejja .. Irridek f'idejja.... U l-  
ghana li ghannejt tul iz-  
zghozija... Jiena nibqa  
nghannih mieghek fix-xjuhija.**

Can you spot these objects?: Kinnie, Stuffat tal-fenek (Rabbit Stew), Birra Cisk, Pastizzi, Hobz biz-zejt (bread with oil) , Helwa tat-Tork (Turkish delight), Bebbux (snails), Maqrut (dates slice), Timpana (baked macaroni), Pulpetti (rissoles) , Bigilla (Dip) and Aljotta (fish soup)



**I AM IN TROUBLE WITH MY PARTNER BECAUSE I FORGOT TO BUY HIM  
'QAGHAQ TAL-GHASEL' AND 'KINNIE' AND I FORGOT  
THE PASTIZZI IN THE OVEN**



## Anglican Community give up church for Midnight Mass in kind gesture to neighbouring Carmelites

Independent.com.mt



Community of Valletta will be able to proceed with its midnight service as hoped for, thanks to a kind gesture by the neighbouring Anglican Community.

At the moment, work is being carried out at the Basilica of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Valletta and the

church cannot be used for liturgical services, Father Alex Scerri from the Carmelite Basilica told *The Malta Independent* on Sunday.

The community is currently holding their services at the Church of Our Lady of Pilar in Valletta, but it is too small to hold the congregation expected to attend the midnight service on Christmas Eve. "Since the Church of Our Lady of Pilar is small, we decided to ask Father Simon Godfrey (Chancellor of St Paul's Anglican Pro Cathedral) whether it would be possible to use the Pro Cathedral for the midnight function," he said.

"As they are a small congregation, Father Godfrey kindly offered to move their service to the Anglican Church in Sliema so that our community can use the Pro Cathedral," he added.

The two churches are located opposite each other in the capital city. The Carmelite community's Christmas celebrations begin at 11.30pm with Christmas carols.

## Disappearance of Maltese Language in overseas communities lamented at Convention for Maltese Living Abroad – Convention 2015



The former Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr George Vella stated that using the English language during conventions in Malta was necessary to ensure that younger participants - particularly second and third generation members of the Maltese diaspora - would not feel left out.

Dr Vella welcomed the fact that second and third generation Maltese were still interested in retaining their Maltese identity, if not necessarily the language:

"although I am sure that they understand the bad words," he quipped.

The minister raised number of points in his address, stating that Malta was underusing the capabilities and services of diaspora Maltese who had made a name for themselves in various fields, and said that the ministry was compiling a list of such people for future use.

At one point, he also drew comparisons between the African migrants risking their lives to reach Europe and the experience of Maltese emigrants decades ago.

While the experience of the Maltese may not have been as dramatic, he observed, they also were forced to leave their country and find a new home in a bid to improve their quality of life.

The minister welcomed the feedback provided by the overseas Maltese, including the criticism, stating that this proved that they had an interest in maintaining links with their country of origin.



## ZEWG STUDENTI JGHAMLU ESPERJENZA F'AWSTRALIA

**Fr. Norbert Bonavia mssp**

*Il-formazzjoni tal-istudenti tagħna tingħata ħafna attenzjoni. Kien għalhekk li **Bros. Giovann Tabone u Alex Zammit**, wara li ġew ordnati djakni fid-19 ta' Mejju 2017 fil-Filippini, intbagħtu l-Awstralja għal xahrejn. Hemmhekk kellhom l-okkażjoni jaqdu l-ministeru tad-Djakonat, u fl-istess ħin jieħdu esperjenza ta' missjoni oħra tas-Socjetà. Qabel kienu diġà żaru u ħadmu fil-missjonijiet tagħna tal-Pakistan, tal-Peru u tal-Filippini fejn qegħdin jistudjaw.*

**Bro. Giovann** - Dak li jagħmel sabih il-formazzjoni inizjali tagħna, fi-ħdan is-Socjetà tagħna, hu l-ħafna tappi u esperjenzi differenti li kellna tul is-snin. Wara li ġejna ordnati Djakni fil-Filippini - kif stajtu ssegwu mill-ħarġa ta' April - morna għall-esperjenza ta' xahrejn ġewwa l-Awstralja. Hemm stajna neżercitaw il-Ministeru tad-Djakonat fil-parroċċa tagħna bix-xandir tal-Kelma u l-Liturġija, u diversi ministeri u attivitajiet differenti. Kellna xorti verament sabiha li naraw dak li s-Socjetà għamlet b'tant fedeltà fl-Awstralja tul is-snin b'mod speċjali mal-emigranti ħutna l-Maltin u l-Għawdxin.

Għalkemm ma nistgħux ngħidu li l-Awstralja hi art missjunarja fis-sens tradizzjonali tal-kelma, wiehed mill-ewwel jinduna bil-bżonn ta' ewangelizzazzjoni, u l-preżenza tal-missjunarju hija u għadha indispensabbli ħafna.

Għaliya kienet esperjenza oħra ta' konvinzjoni li jista' jkollok kollox, imma mingħajr il-preżenza ta' dak li Hu kollox, tibqa' għatxan - u preċiżament huwa hemm li l-Missjunarju jifja' kelma u esperjenza ta' Alla ħaj u relevanti. U dak hu li għamlu u qed jagħmlu, ħutna l-membri tal-MSSP.

Minn qalbi nixtieq nirringrazzja u nsellem b'ħafna rispett lil ħutna missjunarji li qed jagħmlu tant xogħol siewi. Ħajjitkom, ħidmietkom u l-eżempju tagħkom ispirawna ferm aħna u nippreparaw għall-Ordinazzjoni Presbiterali fi ħdan is-Socjetà tagħna.

**Bro. Alex** - L-esperjenza ġewwa l-Awstralja kienet għaliya opportunità biex niskopri iktar mill-qrib l-identità tagħna bħala missjunarji fl-Awstralja. Il-ħidma pastorali tagħna kienet iffukata fuq żewġ parroċċi tal-MSSP ġewwa Melbourne - fil-parroċċa St. James the Apostle immexxija minn Fr. Jude Pirota u fil-parroċċa St Bernadette immexxija minn Fr. John Taliana. Fiż-żewġ parroċċi n-nies laqgħuni bi ħġarhom u kelli spazji fejn ngħix id-djakonat li rċevejt. Wiehed mill-iktar elementi formattivi kien id-diversità ta' kulturi li wiehed isib fil-pajjiż. Il-multikulturaliżmu huwa element importanti fil-parroċċi tagħna, u jippreżenta opportunitajiet u sfidi sabiex il-parroċċa tkun komunità ospitabbli għad-diversità li ġġib magħha kull persuna.

F'dawn ix-xahrejn fl-Awstralja kelli opportunità li nsib ruhi f'post privileġġat fil-ħajja tan-nies. B'ħafna gratitudni nħares lura lejn din l-esperjenza u ninduna kemm ingħatajt fiduċja biex nisma' u nakkumpanja n-nies li ltqajt magħhom, kemm fil-liturġija u s-sagramenti, kif ukoll meta mort inżur in-nies fid-djar tagħhom. Stajt nagħraf kemm l-identità tagħna bħala missjunarji ssejħilna biex inkunu preżenti fil-ħajja tan-nies. F'kultura li kull ma tmur qiegħda ssir iktar sekulari, qiegħed jikber l-għatx fil-klub tan-nies għal ħajja li tagħmel iktar sens, relazzjonijiet iktar awtentiċi u esperjenza ta' komunità li tiċcelebra l-fidi tagħha.

Žgur li mhux ser ninsa l-persuni li saru parti mill-ħajja tiegħi tul dawn l-aħħar xahrejn, kemm ħutna r-religjużi kif ukoll il-lajci li jaqsmu magħna l-ispiritu tal-komunità tal-MSSP. Ngħożż f'qalbi b'gratitudni r-rigal tal-preżenza u l-imħabba li tawni. Din l-esperjenza kienet għaliya mod kif niskopri l-missjoni tagħna l-MSSP ġewwa l-Awstralja, u nista' ngħid li llum inħoss sens ta' appartenenza għall-ħajja li ngħixu u l-ħidma li nagħmlu bħala komunità tal-MSSP f'dan il-pajjiż





## Early Christmas for the parties - record sums raised

The political parties raised a staggering €1.23 million in fundraising telethons held yesterday. The Labour Party raised €611,497 and the Partit Nazzjonalista 620,319. Both achieved new records. Both party leaders thanked their supporters for

their generosity. The telethons were held between noon and midnight. Variety programmes were presented in both headquarters as volunteers, officials and MPs received phone calls. The PL also held a Christmas market outside its HQ.



(left) Adrian Delia – Leaders of the Nationalist Party  
(Right) Leader of the Labour Part and Prime Minister of Malta



## Christmas Traditions Around the World

### Christmas in Malta

A Maltese Christmas traditionally is centered on the crib or **presepju**. The child's version of the church crib is called **grolta**. Everywhere had at least one crib, varying in size and detail. The crib figures are called **pasturi** and represent Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the shepherds, angels, villagers and animals such as cows, donkeys and sheep. The Cribs are surrounded by lights and plants.

Midnight mass on Christmas Eve is the climax of all religious activities. The whole family attends and everyone wears new clothes. The mass begins with choirs singing carols in Maltese. The highlight of the mass is the reading of a story of the nativity by a ten-year-old boy. After Mass it is customary to greet **Il-Milied It-Tajeb** which is Happy Christmas, to all who attend.



**NARAWKOM GIMGHA OHRA**  
**SEE YOU NEXT WEEK**