



# Maltese e-Newsletter



The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

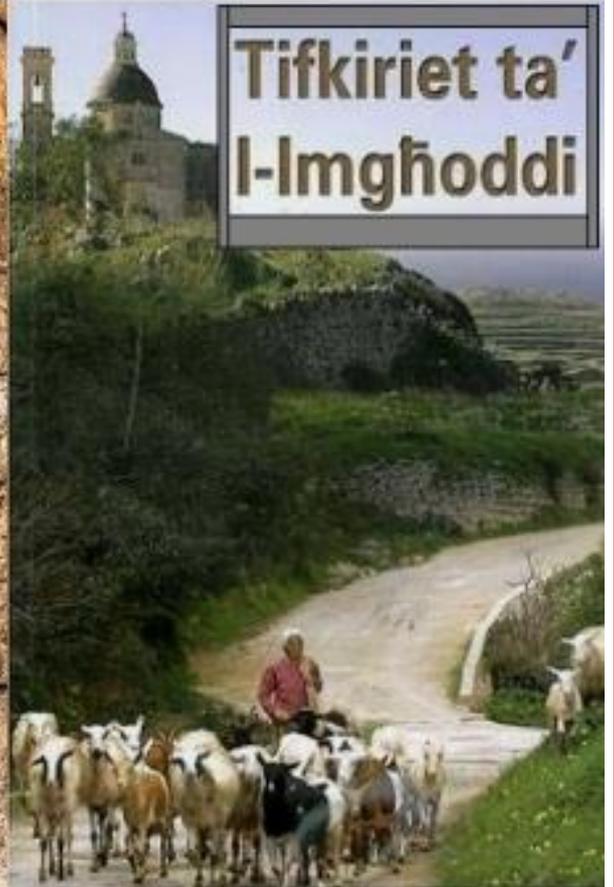
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## PATRIOTIC DOOR IN MALTA



## Tifkiriet ta' l-Imghoddi



The majestic King's Gate  
entrance to Valletta



Berka  
SUNDAY  
ANZAC  
SQUADRON  
IN MALTA



## Study in Malta



Right in the centre of the Mediterranean lies the beautiful islands of Malta, altogether the islands inhabit over 400.000 people. As English is an official language of Malta along with maltese this may be just the perfect place for your first study abroad experience.

### Study abroad in Malta

Studying abroad is not just about digging your head into books but also about getting to know another culture, explore different cuisine and meeting lots of new friends from all over the world. Exploring Malta is easy to do by public transport, by bus or boat it is possible to reach almost every part of the islands. The "Malta bus" is considered a tourist attraction of its own as it has a long tradition on the island.

### The Educational System of Malta

The Maltese educational system is very similar to the British one; Primary education of 6 years > Secondary education of 5 years. To enter higher education in Malta students need Matriculation examination certificate, this is equivalent to the british A-levels and is rewarded after the additional two years of study. These two years are carried out in sixth form college/junior college or another post-secondary education before applying for a university.

### Multi-lingual Malta

Since both Maltese and English are official languages in Malta the teaching in Maltese schools is also conducted in both languages. In higher education most courses are taught entirely in English. Popular elective languages among Maltese students are Italian and French.

### Travelling to Malta

For students from countries part of the Schengen convention who have visa issued from their home country, no visa is needed to enter Malta. However, if decide to go to Malta for your abroad studies it is wise to contact your nearest maltese embassy or consulate for more exact information about visas and other things surrounding your move to Malta.

Upon arrival in Malta you will need documents to show that you will be able to pay tuition fees and otherwise support yourself during your stay.

### Life on Malta

Maltese historic venues are often hosts to outdoor theatres and concerts, and the vibrant calendar of Malta does not stop there. Annual events such as the three-month summer festival and the international jazz festival by floodlit Grand harbor in July also keep the Maltese occupied on their free time.

Nightlife is also very up and coming in Malta, Paceville and St Julian's are the centre of the scene inviting DJ's from all over the globe. For an extra special night out do not miss the summer fiesta providing your senses with fireworks, food and fun all night long.

Malta has a typical mediterranean climate as well as cuisine with inspiration from all over the world, do not miss the traditional delicacy pastizzi and ftira bread.

Surrounded by water, Malta, like any other island, is a land of seafood, fishing boats and the most beautiful diving waters. Vitit caves and hidden beaches in the weekends with your newly found friends.

## About Malta

Valetta is the capital of Malta and also the center of attention for many tourists as the town holds many of the museums, theaters and other tourist attractions. But if you are staying for a longer time than a normal vacation usually lasts for you should definitely take the time to see at least some of the other two large islands. Malta has a long history and has been a part of many historic passthroughs of the world so there is very much to see on the comparably small surface of the Maltese islands.

Sources:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malta#Education> <http://www.study-in-europe.org/>

<http://www.education.gov.mt/>

Dear Frank, I want to add my own sincere congratulations to those of Godfrey Vella, (my cousin in Spain) whose expression of gratitude to you on p7 in issue 242, for your great effort and wonderful way, in which you keep Maltese people and friends, in touch across the globe. My own and my cousin Godfrey's case - he lives in Spain and I in Australia - is manifest example, of how valuable and widely read your publication is, and what it means to your readers and the Maltese culture. Indeed, as the one who originally discussed the E Newsletter with Godfrey, I was thrilled to read his comments and made me realize what a wonderful "gift" the Newsletter is, and how it keeps on giving to those who receive it across the globe. So thank you again Frank, like so many Maltese and others who have a link and or an affinity with our beautiful island, I am deeply indebted to you. Best regards, Joe Briffa Melbourne AUSTRALIA.

## Malta Study Centre

The Malta Study Center was established in 1973 by the Honorary Consul General of Malta-St. Paul/Minneapolis, Joseph S. Micallef, KMOB UOM. The Center preserves and makes accessible the written culture of Malta and the Sovereign Military Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta (also known as the Order of Malta).



The Centre maintains a collection of more than 16,000 reels of microfilm photographed between 1973 and 1999. These materials include documents from the National Library, the Cathedral Archives of Mdina, the parish archives and ecclesiastical libraries and archives of Malta and Gozo. The Center's digital manuscript collection contains over 1.5 million digital images from the National Archives of Malta, the Notarial Archives of Malta, the Confraternity of Charity, and several private libraries and archives digitized in partnership with the Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, including the Palazzo Falson Museum and Library and Archivum de Piro.

The microfilm collection is notable for its unique holdings of the Archives of the Inquisition in Malta at the Cathedral Archives in Mdina and the Archives of the Order of Malta and registers of the Università at the National Library in Valletta. The digital projects added the Magna Curia Castellaniae Acta Originalia and the Epoca Gallica fonds, detailing the islands' civil and criminal court cases from the 16th through the early 19th centuries. The private libraries of the Palazzo Falson and Archivum de Piro, digitized in partnership with the Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, witness to the local history of Malta dating back to the late 17th century as revealed through the records of noble families.



## IL-MAHBUB TAL- MARA THE LOVER

For our friends and fans of Upstart Productions Drama Company who have been impatiently looking forward to our next play, don't think that we have forgotten you. Certainly not!

After the preparations of Spring and Summer, wait no longer, our production has arrived: an intriguing work by

one of England's leading playwrights, and for those who prefer theatre in the Maltese language, Jane Zammit (our Director) has translated it into Maltese: Harold Pinter's Il-Maħbub tal-Mara (The Lover).

When this play first ran in 1963, the Financial Times of London had described it as a "dazzling little play." But this will be the play's premier in Maltese, and set now in present 2018 Malta. In the contemporary context of sex and power relationships between men and women, Il-Maħbub tal-Mara (The Lover) looks at the relationship between a couple, Sarah (Simone De Batista) and Richard (Sandro Vella), whose domestic life has grown weary and they seek to inject some passion into their relationship. However, they do so through means one might not expect! We are not here to judge or to point fingers. If a monotonous marriage was your life, what would you do?

In this play, we are forced to examine relationships between the sexes, and the possible exploitation of one individual over another; yet we also may come to comprehend the nature of the careful balance of power, or imbalance, in relations between men and women. This extraordinary play is one themed for our typical productions: it is a play where one realizes, and indeed empathizes with, the vulnerabilities of our human nature. At times, we feel sorry for the protagonists; and at other times, we are very much amused by their efforts and methods. As we try to understand the situation placed in front of us—which, sometimes, may be similar to our friends, or neighbours, or our parents, or children—perhaps the circumstances more portray ourselves in the privacy of our own homes! In the first part of the play, Sarah's lover remains a mystery.

Is it possible that Richard likes being a cuckold? Or, as we come to understand, will Richard try—and succeed, to get rid of the lover at any price? Or, has Sarah cleverly drawn Richard into her net? Performances begin 20:00 on Saturday-Sunday 17th-18th November 2018 at The Black Studio, Malta School of Drama and Dance, Hamrun (gate entrance to venue, opposite PN Party Headquarters). Tickets: 12€, by mobile: 9942 1415 / 7946 0527 / 7934 6304 & at the door. Email: [ejclemmer@gmail.com](mailto:ejclemmer@gmail.com) Facebook: Upstart Productions Drama Company.



The Maltese Community Council of South Australia invites all Maltese to join in the Australia Day Parade which will be held on Saturday 26 January 2019. The Parade will start at 6.00 pm in Franklin Street and proceed along King William Street to Elder Park, Adelaide. The members of the Maltese community have taken part in the Parade for several years, however we were unable to do so this year and we are hopeful of being able to again represent our culture, heritage and roots at next year's Parade (2019).

So why not come along, bring your family members, demonstrate your pride in your heritage and your adopted country. Should you wish to have further details please do not hesitate to contact the MCC Secretary, Carmen Spiteri on 0401136673 who will be more than happy to assist you and will give you all the information.



## Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Incorporated

(Inc. No. A1737) A.B.N. 66 736 475 892

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**Internet Website: [www.mccv.org.au](http://www.mccv.org.au) Email Address: [admin@mccv.org.au](mailto:admin@mccv.org.au)**

### PRESS RELEASE

9<sup>th</sup> November 2018

The Maltese Community Council of Victoria held its Annual General Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018. It was well attended by the following Associations:

Melita Social Club, Maltese Community Latrobe Valley, Maltese Historical Association, Maltese Literature Group, Lalor United Bocce, Maltese Association Northern Suburbs Tripoli Social Club, Reskeon Maltese Association, Newport Maltese Association, St Gaetan's Society, Klabb Ghannejja Maltin, Rabat Malta Senior Citizens and St Helena Social Club.

Victor Borg, outgoing President, provided an excellent overview of the activities of the MCCV over the past year. He thanked Paul Borg the outgoing Treasurer who has served the MCCV for the past 54 years. Paul Borg ended his term as Treasurer by providing a Financial Report for the year 2017-2018 indicating the MCCV is travelling well.

Joe Stafrace, the outgoing Vice President, thanked Victor Borg for his ongoing commitment to the MCCV. Candidates new to the MCCV were asked to provide a brief outline of their community and professional background.

George Saliba, President of the Newport Association announced all positions vacant and then announced the nominations all of which were unopposed.

The newly elected Executive of the MCCV are:

President	Marlene Ebejer
Vice President	Victor Borg
Vice President	Nicole Osborne ( Nicole is yet to confirm her acceptance)
Secretary	Andrew Gatt
Treasurer	Edwidge Borg
Assistant Secretary	Antonia Camilleri
Public Relations Officer	Joseph Stafrace
Welfare Director	Rosemary Attard
Social Secretary	Rita Pullicino
MSSP	Fr. Edwin Agius

It is an exciting new chapter for the MCCV with the new executive made up of younger generations working with our community elders. Marlene Ebejer is a specialist family lawyer with her practice in Werribee. She has a long history as a community development worker, university lecturer and author. She recalls attending the Parkville premises when it consisted of a weather board house and she played bingo with her mother and Nanna. She later came to the Centre as a teenager and joined the youth group. She has spent the last year offering free legal advice at the Centre to anyone in need. Nicole Obornes' background will be provided upon the acceptance of the role.

Edwidge Borg is well known to the Maltese Community, she has been a past President and member of the MCCV Executive, instrumental in running Maltese lessons, President of the Federation of Maltese Language Schools Australia, an accountant and recently appointed by the Malta Government as a member of the Council of Maltese Living Abroad.

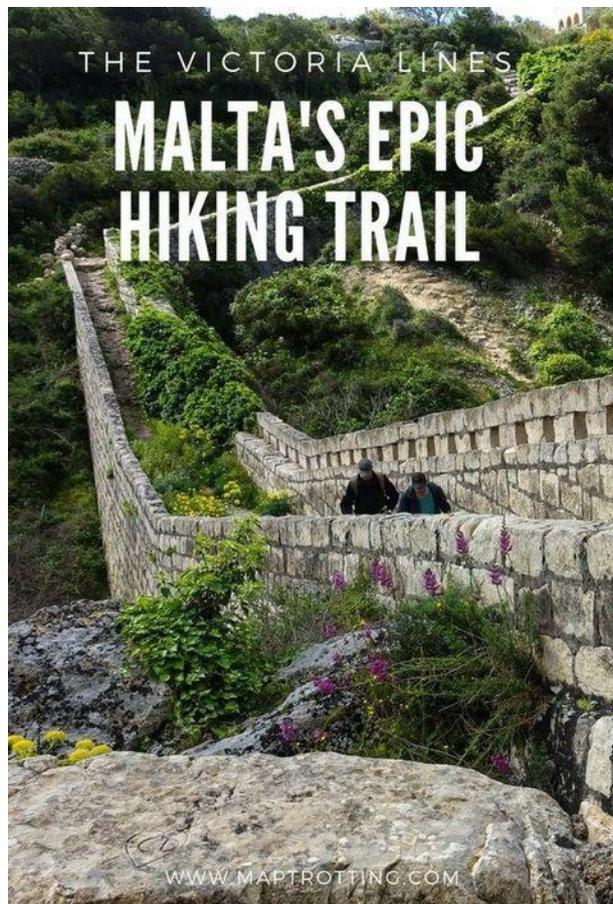
Andrew Gatt, Antonia Camilleri, Rosemary Attard and Rita Pullicino were reelected to their previous positions to carry on the hard work and valued contribution to the MCCV. Victor Borg and Joe Stafrace will continue in their new roles to support the new Executive.

The MCCV Executive look forward to its continued work with the Maltese Community in Victoria.

# The Great Wall of Malta

by Leslie Vella

*Fortifications, bastions, cavaliers, curtains, ravelins – so many names in Malta for stone walls. Here, Leslie Vella points his camera and his attention at a wall less often mentioned in guide books but that's historically and geographically fascinating all the same. A wall you can walk as well!*



*Walls with frontiers*

*Victoria Lines at Bingemma.*

The major British fortification in Malta is the one known as the **Victoria Lines** which spans a 12 km stretch between Madliena/Bahar ic-Caghaq to the East and Kuncizzjoni/Fomm ir-Rih to the West. This fortified system consists of four forts, a number of gun batteries and an unbroken infantry line which connects them together to form a continuous defence which stretches from east coast to west coast and effectively cuts Malta into a northern and a southern half.

**Why the wall?** - When the British arrived in Malta in 1800 their major task was to afford as much protection as was possible to the Grand Harbour area, particularly in view of the great technological advances made by artillery which could launch shells from a far greater distance than was the norm when the Knights built the complex fortifications around Valletta and the Three Cities.

Their major preoccupation was with the exposed sandy beaches in the north of Malta which were then seen as a strategic nuisance rather than the tourism and leisure asset they are today. Their

fear was that an enemy landing in the undefended north of Malta could establish an artillery line which could inflict major damage on the harbour installations.

**Where's the wall** - After considering many options they finally decided to capitalise on a natural fault line which neatly cuts Malta into two parts at the place of its maximum width and to construct a fortified line thereby protecting the populated south from the undeveloped and exposed north. We still travel up and down this fault via various major roads in Malta such as the Bahar ic-Caghaq Coast Road between Splash and Fun and White Rocks, it-Telgha ta' Alla w Ommu in Naxxar and Targa Gap Road outside Mosta among others.

**What is the wall** - This defensive system was built and developed over a 29-year period between 1870 and 1899 and was originally called the North West Front. It was eventually re-christened the Victoria Lines in 1897 to commemorate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. The Victoria Lines consist of four forts (Pembroke, Madliena, Mosta and Bingemma) together with an unbroken low-walled infantry line linking Forts Madliena, Mosta and Bingemma along the course of the fault. The wall is a relatively unimpressive two-metre high affair in most places, but its main objective was to enable defending soldiers to fire down on the enemy below from their protected vantage point in the ridge around 150 metres above.

**Why the wall is important to us today** - To the military history aficionado, the Victoria Lines provide yet another dimension to Malta's millennial history as a strategically located island. They are a logical extension of the defensive works developed by the Knights and shows the extent of what lengths those who valued Malta's location were ready to go to, to defend it from falling into enemy

hands. It is a major, military architecture undertaking built before the advent of heavy machinery and still stands relatively unscathed today, more than one hundred years after it was completed.

For those who are less interested in military matters, the Victoria Lines sit atop some of Malta's highest ground, some 200 metres above sea level, and a walk along them affords excellent views of the entire northern half of the island together with Gozo and Comino. Even distant Sicily is clearly visible on crisp winter days. Another bonus associated with a walk along the Lines is that they are set along some beautiful countryside which is generally free from excessive development. Beautiful walks are possible near Gharghur, on the Dwejra Lines overlooking Mosta and Mgarr and between Bingemma and Fomm ir-Rih.

Like a lot of our ancestors' major efforts aimed at protecting Malta from invasion, the Victoria Lines were never tested in war. They however remain as a legacy to times gone by when conflict around our shores was a daily reality and when war, or the prospect of war, brought economic prosperity while peace brought depression and hunger I also value the Victoria Lines because they have probably, unwittingly, constrained development in Malta to the southern half whilst ensuring that the northern half remained relatively emptier. Having been built to resist invasion from the north to the south, their major achievement has been to suppress development from breaching their unbroken line and invading the north! For this we should be grateful as it has ensured that in spite of living on one of the most densely-populated territories on the planet we still have a beautiful, open countryside which is there for all to enjoy.-----



*Jim Borg, Home Director Fr. Martin Micallef and Marisa Privitera*

### **Friends of Divine Providence House Group NSW Australia**

The Friends of Providence House of New South Wales, Australia, which was formed in 2011 to promote and raise funds in Australia for *Dar tal-Providenza*, The group has already donated thousands of dollars to the residential home in Siggiewi for disabled people.

[www.dartalprovidenza.org](http://www.dartalprovidenza.org)

The Group was founded in October 2011 with the aim of raising funds for Id-Dar tal-Providenza, Malta. The current structure is as follows:

- Mr Jim Borg, Co-ordinator/Treasurer
- Ms Marisa Previtiera, Secretary

The Friends of Providence House is the official Ambassador to Id-Dar tal-Providenza in New South Wales, Australia.

#### **CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2018**



The Friends of Providence House NSW Are Once Again Launching The Christmas Fund Raising Appeal In Aid Of Id-Dar Tal – Providenza in Malta.

Donations Can Be Made At Any Commonwealth Bank In Australia :

Account name : Friends Of Providence House NSW

BSB 062416 A/C 10199448

Please supply contact details for acknowledgement.

Or Call Jim Borg on: 96367767 / 0418825591

We can also be contacted on Email: [foph@bigpond.com](mailto:foph@bigpond.com)

Thank you Antoinette Zammit for your nice donation at Westpoint Blacktown.

# Meaning of Few Maltese Surnames

Chucky Bartolo



The deep, religious meaning of many Maltese first names is quite easily identified, but where exactly did our surnames come from?

From Abela to Zammit Malta has quite the variety (bar the Borgs) and our friends **over at Kelma Kelma** have decided to help clear the air about a few of them.

**1. Psaila** Derived from the word *bsajla*, your surname basically means **onion**. Time to become bffs with a Theuma...

**2. Theuma** Most likely derived from the Arabic *al-tawmi* - aka someone who grows **garlic** in their fields. It could also be derived from the word *tawm* meaning **twins**.

**3. Camilleri** We're not gonna beat around the bush with this one - your surname means **camel driver**.

**4. Vella** Hey Vellas, you lucked out - your surname comes from bella i.e. **beautiful**.

**5. Farrugia** Another surname of Arabic origins, Farrugia comes from al-farrudj, which sounds fancy, but really means **chicken feeder**.

**6. Borg** Ah, the famous borg. Still occasionally used in colloquial terms, Borg means a **pile of rocks**. The original Arabic definition for *burdj* was a **small, rocky tower**. (No, it has nothin' to do with the Northerner's *Borg* with a hard 'g').

**7. Micallef** Does your Micallef friend always have to have the final say? It may be in their blood as their surname literally means **judge**.

**8. Scerri** The multiple spellings of Scerri vs Xerri are only the tip of the iceberg. This surname could have descended from the Sicilian *sciarr* meaning **a fight** or from Arabic's *sharra* meaning **cruel**. There's also theories about it being *shirra* meaning **anger**.

Either way, it's not looking good Scerris.

**9. Calleja** You're either a descendant of the *kalleyias*, making you a **farmer**, or from the *kallas* meaning **good and sweet**. Alternatively, you're both, making you a cute farmer.

**10. Buhagiar** Congrats! You're the proud **father of a bunch of rocks** - just combine *abu* (Arabic for father) and *hadjar* (rocks).

**11. Zahra** You're either **shiny**, or the beautiful **white blossom of an orange tree**. Either way, you're lucky, mate. (check out poor Scerri if you don't believe us).

**12. Zerafa** You'd better hope you're a tall Zerafa or the irony of your surname will never wash away. *Zarafah* means **giraffe**. There is some hope, it may have come from *zarifa*, meaning **graceful**.

**13. Agius** From the Arabic *adjuz*, we won't beat around the bush with this explanation since you don't have much time left - Agius basically means you're old AF.

**14. Cachia** Cut those Cachias out of your life, originating from the nickname *kakias*, their name literally means bad and cruel-spirited.

**15. Xuereb** Always down for a good time, Xuerebs are either named after impressive moustaches or after their alcoholism. Either way, you're gonna want to invite a Xuereb to a party.

**16. Gauci** Hailing from across the pond, the Guacis are *Ghawdxis*... aka from Gozo.

**17. Chetcuti** Probably making the best of friends to Farrugias (the chicken feeders), Chetcutis are named after new-born chicks, *katkut*.

**18. Azzopardi** The *azzo* part means noble, the *pardi* part is up for debate. You're either named after a noble beard, or a noble leopard. Really, there's no losers here.

**19. Falzon** Keep your friends close, and your Falzons closer. Originating from Italy, a Falzon is a false person, or someone who enjoys lying.



## Radio broadcasters flock to Valletta for the annual International Radio Festival

The weeklong festival will see local and international radio networks broadcasting from Malta by Liam Carter

Radio stations and broadcasters from all around the world have gathered in Piazza D'Armi in

Valletta for the 9th edition of the annual [International Radio Festival](#).

The Swiss born week long festival, which is also the first, and only one of it's kind in the world, showcases the business production and curation of the world's most consumed media format, audio-radio content.

More than 30 international radio stations will be broadcasting live from Malta via the [International Radio Festival](#) DAB+ channel, with such broadcasts expected to reach an audience of more than 100 million.

Local radio stations Bay Radio, Vibe FM, XFM and Magic Malta will also be broadcasting live from the IRF alongside many internationally renowned networks such as: BBC Radio 1 (UK), Raid Radio 3 (Italy), Kasheme (Zurich), Le Mouv (France), Pride Radio (U.S), Love Radio (China), Kiss FM (Australia) and many more.

Then on Thursday key speakers from the industry shall debate in 'The Audio Conference' which will be held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre. Notable speakers include international radio consultant John Simons, BBC R&D Executive Producer Nicky Birch and James Keen, station director for Channel 103 and Island FM in the Channel Islands.

The IRF was founded in 2010 to specifically celebrate radio's on-air influencers and their production teams who command the trust and loyal "ear" of billions of listeners around the globe, and is unique in that the conference format offers invited radio stations the opportunity to showcase their chosen programme formats to attendees whilst simultaneously broadcasting said programmes live-on-air from the conference back to their home audiences, thus reaching millions of global listeners and making the IRF the largest media event of its kind. The Malta Tourist Authority is the festival's key supporter. [www.internationalradiofestival.com](http://www.internationalradiofestival.com)



**University of Malta Rector Prof. Alfred J Vella, trying to place a graduates hat on a graduate during a graduation ceremony in Valletta.**

**Photo: Chris Sant Fournier**

## Serata Pjaċevoli b'Risq I-Community Chest Fund

Nhar is-Sbt filgħaxija, 3 ta' Novembru 2018 għadd sabiħ ta' Għawdxin, xi Maltin u barranin attendew għall-Ikła li saret għand Ta' Frenċ, nofs triq bejn ir-Rabat u Marsalforn, b'risq il-Community Chest Fund li fi tmiemha s-Sinjura Marygrace Attard ipprezentat Donazzjoni lis-Sur John Camilleri f'isem il-President ta' Malta li ma setgħetx tkun prezenti u lil Nadia Gatt mill-Community Chest Fund.

Matul l-ikla li matulha kien qed jagħmel id-debut tiegħu ix-Chef Shawn Smith-Roberts bil-għajnuna sħiħa tal-Executive Chef Mario Schembri, ħadet sehem is-Santa Ċeċilja Foundation Orchestra taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Mro Antoine Mercieca li żewġet b'mod tajjeb is-serata b'siltiet ta' mużika klassika li niżlu tant tajjeb fost dawk li kienu prezenti. Wara l-ewwel platt l-Orkestra daqqet is-'Sarabanda' ta' George Frederick Handel, 'Alla Turca' ta' Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, il-'Minuetto' ta' Boccarini u 'Eine Klene Nachmusic – 1st Movement ta' Mozart ukoll. Wara iktar ikel, smajna mbagħad siltiet tassew melodjużi mill-Musical magħruf u popolari 'Phantom of the Opera' li għadu qed jintwera fil-West End ta' Londra. Wara l-Main Dish tant delizzjuż, is-Santa Ċeċilja Foundation Orchestra tatna tliet valzers ta' Johann Straus Junior, 'Pizzicato Polka', 'Emperor Waltz' u 'Roses from the South' bis-sehem taż-żeffiena Christabelle Bajada u Jacob Spiteri.

Wara li saret id-donazzjoni ta' flus lill-Community Chest Fund mis-Sinjura Attard, is-Serata divertenti u delizzjuża b'risq il-Karita giet fi tmiemha bl-eskuzzjoni tal-Blue Danube mill-Orkestra mistiedna għall-okkażjoni taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Mro Antoine Mercieca.

**Kav Joe M Attard** [emarjos@hotmail.com](mailto:emarjos@hotmail.com)

## THE FAIRNESS OF REPORTING VICTOR V. VELLA. M.A. (SYDNEY UNIV)

One of the most interesting aspects of the Royal Commission on Child Abuse was the way the proceedings and conclusions were reported. If the truth may be told, it may also open the doors for another commission on the 'abuse by the media'!! In this article I will concentrate on one very important medium, the national broadcaster of Australia, the ABC., supposed to be the doyen or the perfect exemplar of reportage, which one would think would have the words 'truth' and 'balance' printed large in its mission statement.

I would like to concentrate on a very small but important part and omissions by our National network the ABC amply subsidised by our taxes. What the Royal commission brought to the surface was not only the abuse but the anti-Catholic feeling within some parts of the media especially of the national network the ABC. This may be interpreted as a way of side tracking its own misdemeanors. Let me recall a couple of cases in detail about abuses within its own ranks while airing the Catholic part in the abuse saga. This story shows how blatant is and was the failure of the national broadcaster in this area.

The ABC. has not reported the fact that former ABC TV producer Jon Stephens pleaded guilty in 2017 to sexually assaulting a twelve-year old boy while on official ABC duties in 1981.—except for a fleeting reference in one midday news bulletin (when the only listeners/watchers are the inmates of Homes for the Elderly) to the fact that Stephen's minimum prison term was reduced on appeal due to his ill-health. Fairfax Media has ignored the story completely.

The ABC. has also not covered the fact that in 1975 the ABC. Radio Program *Lateline* invited three pederasts into its Sydney studio to take part in a program called 'Pederasty'. The ABC did not report this matter to the N.S.W. Police then or since. Nor has it adopted a duty of care to the victims of pederasty who were involved in the program, despite the fact that if alive, they would be about the same age of some of the men who gave evidence to the Royal Commission. Details of this can be

found in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and its sister publication *The National Times* as well as K. S. Inglis 1983 book *This is the ABC*.

On the matter of responsibility for past events, a matter stressed so much by the ABC regarding the Catholic and Anglican Bishops, in recent times both former ABC chairman James Spigelman and his successor Justin Milne made it clear that the ABC does not accept responsibility for what the ABC did or was said on the ABC. ...in 1975. May I add that James Spigelman is also a former Chief Justice of N.S.W.

There is also the story which is unfortunately true and documented that one of the presenters of the ABC series *Lateline*, Richard Neville, back in 1970 published a book entitled *Play Power* where he boasted of having had sex with a fourteen-year old schoolgirl in London and his child abuse was discussed in public at that time. Neville died in 2016 but the ABC did not report his past child sex abuse.

There is more, but let me finish with another scandal which the ABC virtually kept under wraps. This has to do with the revelations of Rozanna and Kate Liley the daughters of left wing writer Dorothy Hewett and Merv Liley..that their mother encouraged them to have under age sex with writer Bob Ellis and artist Martin Sharp...all of whom were at least twice the age of their schoolgirl victims. This story was only covered in low-profile programs.

That's enough on the ABC. Turning to the 'judges' and the main actors connected to the media and/or the Royal Commission. How can one not expect a slanted judgement when you have these people as judges and jury of the case! I'm referring to Peter Fizimons, a born-again atheist, and Stephen Crittenden, a disillusioned Catholic, a senior manager of the Royal Commission and David Marr, a disillusioned Anglican! One cannot expect too much judgemental neutrality there!

No wonder they concentrated on the main Churches. I said the 'main'. Other so-called call churches were conveniently left out of their screens. Obviously they were very happy with their target. It gave them an ample chance to flaunt their ideologies and antipathies by emphasising the 'speck' in others' eyes and ignoring the 'beams' in theirs.



## AFL-MALTA

The objectives of AFI Malta include:

- Encouraging participation at the grassroots level, with a focus on youth and community development
- Establishing Footy 9s in the Maltese school sports curriculum at both primary and secondary level
- Introducing Footy 9s as a university sport in Malta
- Providing players with the opportunity to compete in competitions at school and club level in Malta
- Establishing National Teams (men & women) to compete in matches against other countries
- Securing recognition of Footy 9s as an official sport in Malta

## ALEXIEI DINGLI - Profile of the Mayor of Valletta

Dr Alexiei Dingli was born on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 1979 and lived most of his life in Valletta . He is the son of Paul & Doris (nee Carbonaro) and he is married to Anna Maria (nee Degiorgio). He started his studies at the Pillar Primary School in Valletta and after successfully passing an entry exam; he continued his formation (primary, secondary and post-secondary) at De La Salle College. After completing his Matriculation Examinations and obtaining the highest grade possible, he read a Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology (B.Sc. IT Hons) within the University of Malta where he obtained a First Class degree.



Immediately after, he decided to continue his studies at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom . To earn a living, he found a job as a researcher within the same University. He spent slightly less than three years and while there, he pursued in a record time, a Doctorate (Ph.D) in Computer Science. His work was praised by international Professors and it was awarded a World Class status. It was also published in books, journals and in some of the most prominent conferences on the subject. Upon his return to Malta , he started working as a Senior Manager with the Employment and Training Corporation ( Malta 's Public Employment Service) where he stayed for almost four years. With the opening of the new Faculty of ICT in 2007, he moved over to the Department of Artificial Intelligence where he holds the position of Lecturer.

Apart from this, he also works as a Lecturer with the University of London which is represented in Malta by the St Martins Institute of IT. In these past years, he also managed to obtain a Masters in Business Administration with specialisation in Technology Management from the Grenoble Business School in France where he graduated with distinction.

Dr Dingli has been working in the Nationalist Party for these past sixteen years. When he was just eleven year old, he started volunteering in the various organisations of the Party. At the age of fifteen, he was elected for the first time in the PN sectional committee in Valletta where he took care of the Youth section. On his return from the UK , he once again offered his services to the committee where he was elected as vice president and after a few months as President of the PN Valletta sectional committee. In 2005, he contested the Valletta Local Council elections where he was elected as a councillor of the city. In his portfolio, one finds youth, education, the social aspect and work. In these past years as a councillor, he coordinated a large number of projects, the biggest amongst these being the setting up and coordination of the Valletta Community Network (the network of organisations working in Valletta in the social dimension). The project served as a catalyst to speed up the creation, by central government, of the first community centre in Valletta.

Dr Dingli is a hardworking young man always ready to help others; he is a very dynamic person and full of energy. He believes that his country offered him a lot; free educational and health services of the highest quality and an environment rich in fundamental values which made him what he is today. This formation was crucial for him since it opened a myriad of opportunities abroad. Opportunities which he took, and managed to make a success out of them! Now, he believes that the time has come for him to offer his service to the nation. His believes are targeted at achieving the common good and directed by Christian-Democratic principles and values.

*Love, respect, support and trust  
each other*

## AMAZING BAY RETRO IMAGES SHOW LIFE IN MALTA 100 YEARS AGO



Formosa's beautiful shopfront on Kingsway in Valletta in the 1920s -Bay Retro

[BAY RETRO](#), [MALTA](#), [OLD PHOTOS](#)

These days, living in Malta is all about avoiding traffic jams, answering countless emails at work and posing for selfies on social media, but 100 years ago life was a much simpler affair.

Back in the early 1900s, when a journey to London took 10 days instead of two-and-a-half hours on a budget airline, many Maltese were just getting the hang of photography.



Now a series of amazing images from this era have emerged – with incredible pictures of Malta's Edwardians in front of the camera.

The black and white images, shared by history enthusiast Mario Schembri on 89.7 Bay's award-winning Bay Retro Facebook page, show how the fashions of the time for women often involved the traditional black ghonella.

## MIGRATION TO CANADA

Dear Frank, As always, I greatly enjoy each issue of the Maltese e-Newsletter and share it with many others. I must, however, respectfully disagree with the first sentence, on page 11, concerning Canada, in issue # 243. There was *no* significant Maltese emigration to Canada in 1840. In fact, there was *none* at all in that year and less than 20 *in total* prior to 1905! Between 1905 and 1909, the numbers were less than 10 each year. Double digits were reached during the years 1910 through 1912 and then rose in a "significant manner" to 893 in 1913, a number not to be exceeded until 1951. Only 22 Maltese immigrated to Canada during the first two years of First World War, but 358 arrived between 1916 and 1917. Over 550 arrived in 1919, but the number dropped to under 200 in 1920. After 1920, and until 1948, the numbers of Maltese immigrating to Canada dropped to double digits, then single digits and, in the case of 1938, none at all.

Yours respectfully, Dan Brock, London, Canada

*Dan Brock, who is based in London, Ontario, Canada, is the editor of the newsletter of the Maltese Canadian Club of London, Canada.*



### PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

#### ***Speaker Anġlu Farrugia participates in the launch of the updated Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures***

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia, in his capacity as Chairperson of the CPA Small Branches, delivered a speech at the launching of the updated CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures, which was held at the Houses of Parliament, London. In his address,

entitled 'The Process of Updating the Benchmarks and the Importance for CPA Small Branches', Speaker Farrugia said

"We also now have a set of benchmarks that are fit for the future, aligned with the Commonwealth Charter and United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16. The benchmarks are a tool with the potential to transform parliamentary governance across the Commonwealth and improve the lives of millions.

Before closing, I would also like to mention the involvement of the Parliament of Malta in the work to develop a field guide to assist parliaments to assess themselves against the benchmarks. As the Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, I welcome this opportunity to further implement the benchmarks and I would encourage other presiding officers who are here today to consider assessing their Parliaments against the CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures."

The CPA EXCO members were also addressed by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, UK Commonwealth Minister; Emilia Lifaka M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon and Chairperson of the CPA; Thomas Hughes, Board Member Westminster Foundation for Democracy and Executive Director at Article 19, and Roberta Blackman-Woods M.P., CPA UK Executive Committee Member. Anthony Smith, Chief Executive of Westminster Foundation for Democracy, delivered the opening remarks and introduction as well as the closing remarks.

## **MALTA NAMED ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO VISIT IN 2019**



### BAY NEWS

**Malta** is the place to be in 2019.

That's according to a new list compiled by travel experts searching for '10 Dreamy European Islands You Have To Visit in 2019'.

The experts at holiday company **Vivere** ranked Malta in third place behind the Italian island of Sardinia and the Greek island of Paros.

They said of Malta: 'This tiny island nation tucked between the coastlines of Sicily and North Africa is filled with rich history and stunning architecture. 'With prehistoric temples and walled medieval cities, visitors flock here largely for the culture fix, though beaches are next-level, too.'

But you knew that already! Malta ranked ahead of the islands of Fuerteventura, Crete, Capri, Sicily and Koufonisia in the list, featured by **Coastal Living**.



## VALLETTA'S BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS NATIVITY SCENE IS UNVEILED

Bay Newsbeautiful Malta, Christmas, Cribs, Floriana, Lovemalta, Malta, Triton Fountain, Valletta

Malta is gearing up for a festive transformation this week. The Christmas nativity scene is due to be officially opened on Tuesday, marking

the start of festive season. The life-size crib has been set up in Triton Square in Valletta this year, a stone's throw away from the newly-restored fountain.

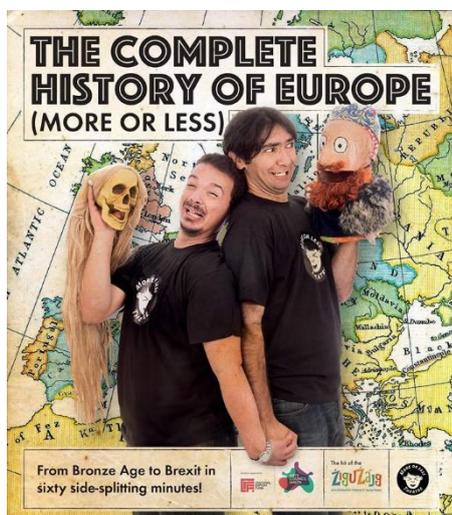


The stunning nativity scene was designed and created by the talented Maltese artist Manwel Grech in 2016.

It has already been exhibited in Bethlehem and at the Vatican, where it's said to have greatly impressed Pope Francis.

Meanwhile, **Valletta's** Christmas lights are expected to be switched on before the end of

November, adding plenty of festive sparkle to the capital city



## THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF MALTA (MORE OR LESS)

'The Complete History of Malta (More or Less)' is a hilarious family show that tells you everything you need to know about Malta's wonderful history in a fun, action-packed hour. The play is presented by just two actors using a wide variety of silly wigs, beards, and even sillier accents. Simply put, it's a very effective, efficient and entertaining way to learn about the exciting events that made Malta what it is today.

'The Complete History of Malta (More or Less)' first premiered in Valletta at the ŽiguŽajg Kids & Youth Arts Festival in 2011 and has been entertaining audiences ever since! This year, every Saturday during October, November and the first two weeks of December, we

will be staging the play in Maltese at various performance spaces situated around the Maltese Islands.

Doors open at 10:30am, show starts at 11:00am! Full dates and locations of the shows can be found below:  
 6th October 2018 — L-Iskola Primarja ta' Kerċem, Kerċem, Għawdex  
 13th October 2018 — Sala Marija Bambina, Gudja, Malta  
 20th October 2018 — Għaqda Mużikali Imperjali, Il-Mellieħa, Malta  
 27th October 2018 — Is-Sala taċ-Ċentru Parrokkjali Marija Bambina, Ғaḥ-Ḑabbar, Malta  
 3rd November 2018 — L-Iskola Primarja ta' Sannat, Sannat, Għawdex  
 10th November 2018 — Il-Kunsill Lokali tal-Mosta, Ċentru Ċiviku, Livell 3, Il-Mosta, Malta  
 24th November 2018 — Kaḥin San Ġuḥepp u Banda De Rohan, Ғaḥ-Ḑebbug, Malta  
 1st December 2018 — Soċjeta Filarmonika San Bartilmew, Ғal-Għargħur, Malta

Each venue can only take a maximum of 100 people, so book your tickets quickly before they run out! We will also have a limited number of tickets available at the door on the day. For further inquiries, please either get in touch with us directly over Facebook Messenger or give us a call on 99438157.

## Cremation in Malta Could Seriously Be On The Way As Government Announces New Bill

Johnathan Cilia – [lovingmalta.com](http://lovingmalta.com)



Malta may be one step closer to offering cremation for deceased people as the Government announced they are discussing a new bill on alternative forms of burial. Earlier today, Minister for Health Chris Fearne announced in Parliament today that the Government would be looking into "future planning" for families. Now, MP Rosianne Cutajar announced that she will be leading a team that could change the way Maltese people bid farewell to their loved ones in the future. "Excited and honoured to spearhead the cremation bill, a revolutionary step forward on behalf of the

Maltese government. Individual freedom is a core part of my politics, and cremation is a reflection of this right. More details soon," said Ms Cutajar in a Tweet.

### **More and more people have been demanding cremation in Malta**

Previously, there was no way to provide human cremation on the island, with no legal framework in Malta for cremation or a crematorium, with many entrepreneurs who had approached the Planning Authority with ideas for a crematorium getting refused.

However, the new bill, which is near completion and will soon be presented to Cabinet, could provide the much-needed framework.

There are also potential economic benefits, with discussions regarding whether it would be more affordable for nationalities like Sicilians to come to Malta to cremate their loved ones, as opposed to going to Rome, being held.

A press conference is set to be called in the coming weeks with more details to be announced. This is set to be the first Private Member's Bill to be proposed by a Government backbencher in this legislature, spearheaded by the youngest Member of Parliament, Rosianne Cutajar.

It is also worth noting that contrary to popular belief, the Catholic Church is not against cremation as long as the ashes of the person are placed in a consecrated location, like a cemetery.

### **A crematorium would also provide an answer for humanists, atheists, and people of other faiths, to say goodbye to their loved ones in an appropriate manner**

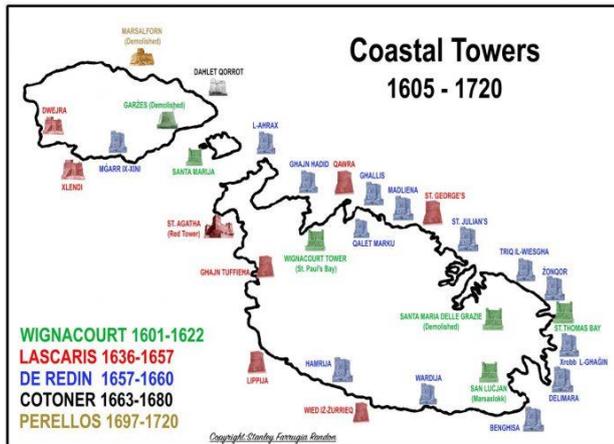
Humanist funerals would even be held in a room near the crematorium, in a dedicated 'Tribute Room'. It would also open the door for people who want their ashes scattered at sea, or at a specific location.

## TORRI XUTU: FROM UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE TORRIERO TO UNDER THE WATCH OF THE COAST POLICE



Looking out in Filfla's direction in Wied iż-Żurrieq is one of these structures; Ta' Xutu Tower, which was recently restored by [Din l-Art Helwa](#) with the support of [The Malta Airport Foundation](#). Whilst restoration works have

been completed, The Malta Airport Foundation is working towards getting the necessary permits to carry out landscaping works around the tower, with the aim of turning the surrounding area into a well-kept open space.



To learn more about these watchtowers, we spoke with Dr Stanely Farrugia Randon. A doctor by profession with a penchant for researching about Malta's environmental and cultural history, Dr Farrugia Randon has been a council member of Din l-Art Hejwa for the past 26 years, during which he has been involved actively in the management of restoration projects.

**Q. Having been built by five Grand Masters, namely Wignacourt, De Redin, Lascaris, Cotoner and Perellos, do the different towers bear the 'structural hallmarks' of the Grand Master who built them? A.** Even the towers that are very similar in appearance, have internal and external differences, which probably

reflect the preferences of the Grand Master or the architects involved in their construction. The majority of the small coastal towers are set on two floors, with the lower one having been used for ammunition and the upper one having accommodated the soldiers on duty. Towers such as Wignacourt in St Paul's Bay also house a kitchen and a toilet, and towers including San Luċjan, St Agatha and St Thomas are bigger and even more complex, having large cisterns to store water for bigger troops positioned within them for long periods when the island would be under siege.

**Q. Were these towers manned on a 24-hour basis, and by whom were they manned? A.** All of these watchtowers had to be guarded and armed, both during the day and in the nighttime, in preparation for the eventuality of an enemy fleet attempting disembarkation. Whilst the Grand Masters and the knights donated money for the running of these look-out posts, and affixed their coats of arms to the buildings, it was the Maltese who guarded them. The number of guards deployed depended on the location and the size of the tower. A bombardier who was trained in firing cannons would be present, especially during difficult times, and very often there would also be a Torriero, who was considered to be the commander of the place. However, in reality, often there would not be enough men to guard each post, leading to the abandonment of some of the towers soon after their construction.



**Q. Ta' Xutu was the first tower to have vaulted ceilings instead of wooden beams. Why was there a shift towards this type of ceiling in the construction of these towers? A.**

Small coastal towers such as the ones in Gnejna (Lippija Tower), Qawra, St George's Bay and Ghajn Tuffieħa were built during the reign of Grand Master Lascaris with roofs that were not robust enough to carry the weight of a cannon and withstand its recoil. Whilst Ta' Xutu was also built under Lascaris's reign, its vaulted upper floor furnished it with enough structural sturdiness to have a cannon on its roof, essentially enabling the tower to defend itself and

act as a relay station signalling enemy approach. This structure was a success, so much so that Ta' Xutu served as the prototype of the towers that were built by Lascaris's successor; De Redin. It is interesting to note that whilst Lascaris's towers were paid for out of the people's taxes, De Redin paid for the construction and woodwork of his 13 towers himself; a total that amounted to slightly over 6428 scudi.

**Q. Ta' Xutu went on to be used during the second World War. Was the tower's role during this time different from its original function? A.** During this time, the tower was used as a coast observation post, and was manned by the Coast Police. Ta' Xutu was, in fact, used as a police station until 2002, when it was abandoned. During the time of the war, most of the watchtowers were used by military or naval authorities.



## BirdLife Malta's Wings Over Valletta – A White Wagtail celebration

BirdLife Malta is organising – Wings Over Valletta - A White Wagtail Celebration – which is taking place from Sunday, the 18th, until Sunday, the 25th of November, in Great Siege Square, Valletta, between 10am and 6pm. The NGO said that over 10,000 White Wagtails roost in the trees at Valletta's Great Siege Square during late autumn and the winter months.

BirdLife Malta would like as many people as possible to experience the amazing sight of thousands of birds circling over the Ficus trees in Valletta. With the support of Valletta 2018, BLM said that it is celebrating this with multiple events at the Great Siege Square. There will be an Art Day on Sunday, the 18th between 10am and 4pm when BirdLife is inviting everyone to – “find your inner artist and discover these amazing birds through creativity.”

Bird roosting activities are on the programme for Saturday and Sundays, the 18th, 24th and 25th, between 4pm and 6pm. Visitors to the square will be able to survey the birds, notice their wagging tail or just listen to their beautiful call. There is also a Social Media Photography Contest – Those who wish to enter, just have to visit Valletta and take photos of the White Wagtails and then post the photos on social media until the 25th of November, using the hashtag #WagtailsOverValletta.

BirdLife said that the winner of this contest will be chosen randomly by a draw. The more entries, the more chances to win the prize – An online BirdLife Malta membership for a year, A feature and mention on the BirdLife Malta Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts that have thousands of followers and its magazine 'Bird's Eye View.' The NGO added that, an exclusive merchandise produced for this initiative A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Malta. To participate in this competition entrants must read and agree to the terms of entry, BirdLife Malta said. Valletta2018

## JIENA NHOBB NITKELLEM MAGHKOM – L-ILSIEN MALTI

Ma kontx naqbad il-pinna biex nikteb fuq dan is-suggett kieku ma rajtx li sal-lum ghad hawn hafna fehmiet imghawga dwar il-htiega tat-tagħlim tal-Malti. U qatt ma ktibt fuq hekk għaliex jidhirlu li mhux ta' min ifakkar f'dak iz-zmien ta' għajb kbir għalina l-Maltin li kellna naraw f'Malta għieda kbira ta' fehmiet bejn il-Maltin stess fuq il-jedd ta' l-ilsien Malti u l-ilsna barranin.

M'iniex ngħid għan-nuqqas ta' ftehim fuq xi rqaqat fl-ortografija, imma qieghed ngħid li jmissna nhammru wiccna meta niftakru li, sa flit tas-snin ilu, il-Malti kien għadu mitkellem biss fit-toroq u fil-kcina u mwarrab għal kollox mill-qrati u mill-iskejjel. U la kien magħruf il-Malti safi u lanqas dak li mhux safi.

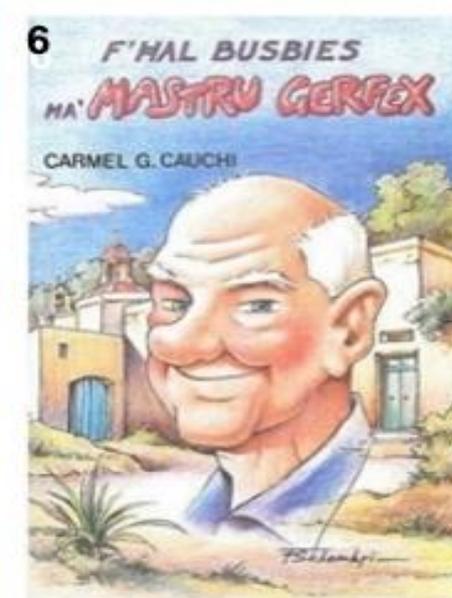
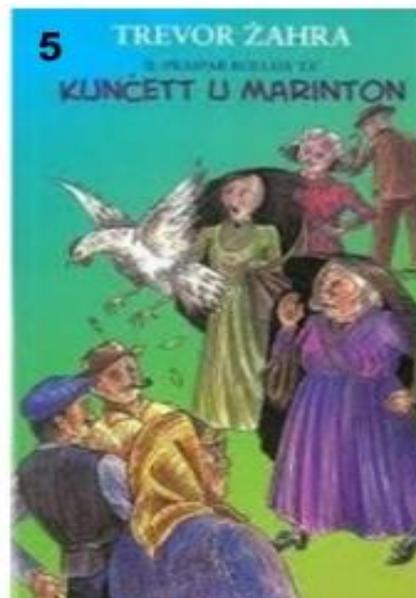
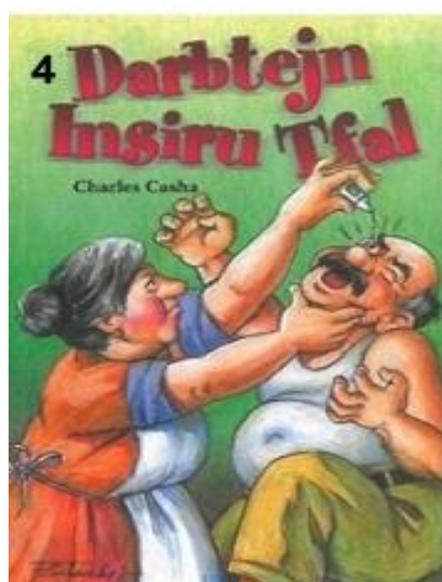
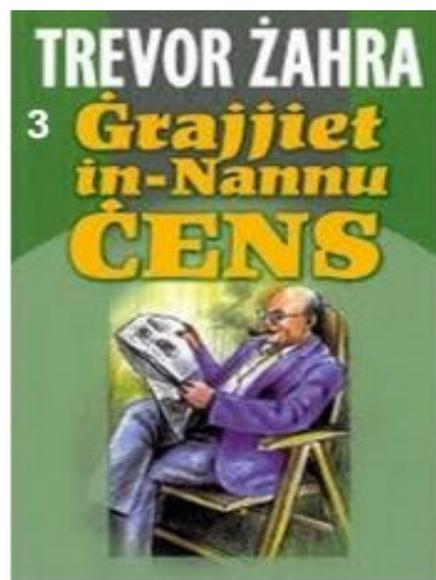
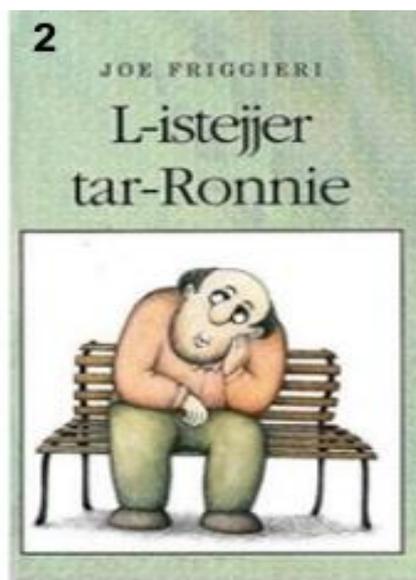
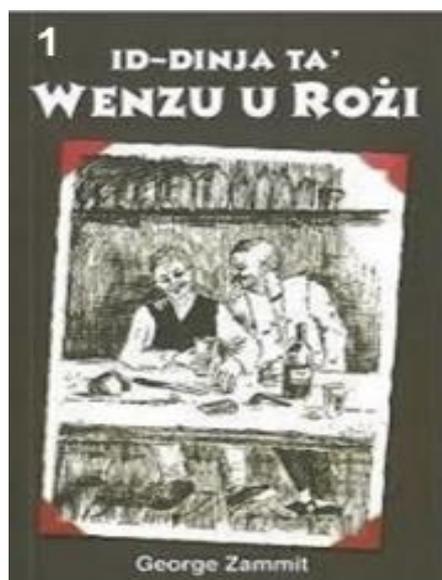
Lil dawk li donnhom ma fehmux il-jedd u l-htiega ta' l-ilsien Malti u lil dawk li, kieku kien min għalihom, il-Malti għadu kif kien, imwarrab minn daru; lil dawk kollha ngħidilhom iharsu tejn il-hajja tal-poplu tagħna. U nistaqsihom: Min jahti ta' dan in-nuqqas kbir ta' edukazzjoni fost il-poplu Malti?

Min jahti ta' dan il-liven baxx fil-kultura u f'kull tagħlim meħtieġ mill-poplu tagħna? Ikunu tassew boloh u bla għaqal jekk huma jwieġbu li dawn in-nuqqasijiet hekk kbar u li ilhom zmien twil fil-poplu tagħna, huma l-htija tal-qawmien u ta' l-indhil ta' l-ilsien Malti li għadu kemm beda jiehu r-ruh fi zmienna.

U ma tridx għerf wisq biex tifhem x'kienet il-htija li l-poplu Malti baqa minn dejjem mizmum hekk. Il-kwistjoni ta' l-ilsien Malta hija marbuta ma' l-istorja ta' Malta. Il-gzejjer tagħna kienu minn dejjem taht il-hakma tal-barranin li dawn ma kienx jaqblilhom li jghinu l-izvilupp ta' l-ilsien Malti għax kienu jafu tajjeb li l-ilsien tal-pajjiz mahkum jgib mieghu qawmien nazzjonali u jnissel fil-qlub mahkuma u mjasra sentiment kbir ta' patrijottizmu. mahkuma u mjasra sentiment kbir ta' patrijottizmu.

F'din il-qagħda l-poplu tagħna kien jahseb u jitkellem kif riduh il-barranin. L-ilsien tagħna qatt ma kien magħruf bhala ufficcjali la mill-awtorijiet tal-Gvernijiet ta' qabel u tal-knisja.

## POPULAR MALTESE HILAROUS BOOKS



1. **Id-Dinja ta' Wenzu u Rozi - George Zammit** Wenzu u Rozi were a favourite for multiple generations. This adorable couple even had their own TV series at one point. The book version is a timeless Maltese tale of two bickering *nanniet* constantly at each other's throats but who really love each other deep down.
2. **The Ronnie Series - Joe Friggieri** Ir-Ronnie was a middle-aged meek Maltese mechanic who always seemed to find himself in serious hood troubles. This one time, he was going to Valletta to exchange plastic caps for cash, and people thought he had a bunch of robins in a box, so they attacked him. This guy had a black cloud constantly roaming over his head.
3. **Grajjet in-Nannu Ċens - Trevor Zahra** Another classic by Trevor Zahra, In-Nannu Ċens is hands down the most adorable man in the universe. He lives with his son and family, and is constantly getting himself into trouble. Funny trouble though, nothing serious. He's also an amazing gramps.

**4. Darbtejn Insiru Tfal - Charles Casha** This book is about a questionable couple who are constantly name-calling and fighting. They're constantly doing slapstick stuff, mostly because they weren't used to each other's routine, and because the woman was a bit of an impossible person to deal with. But hey, it's a comedy, so it's OK. Might hit a bit too close to home though.

**5. Il-Praspar Kollha ta' Kuncett u Marinton - Trevor Zahra** This list is starting to look like a promotion for Zahra's work, but this guy is seriously amazing at what he does. *Kuncett u Marinton* revolves around these two old sisters and their *ghonnellas*. They're both the dictionary definition of *bassa*, but this book is their post-humous story, so maybe we shouldn't be that harsh considering that they were like, a hundred years old.

**6. Mastru Gerfex Series - Carmel G. Cauchi** Mastru Gerfex is one of the most beloved characters to ever be dreamed up in Malta. He's a retired school headmaster who lives with his wife and dog. He's constantly doing pranks since he's a bit bored of the whole pensioner gig. Just like Ronnie, this guy has a cloud constantly floating over his head, but this guy's cloud is more comically unlucky than black.

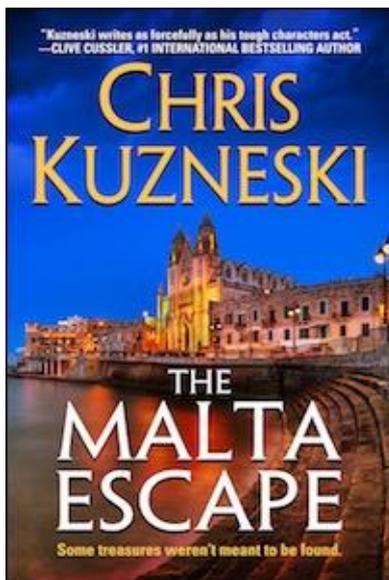


## Pakistan yields to protesters

Asia Bibi, a Christian woman acquitted last week of blasphemy charges and ordered freed, remains in Pakistan. On the left - her three daughters.

On Friday, the government made a deal to halt hard-line Islamist groups' huge protests over the Supreme Court's ruling, which had brought parts of the country to a standstill. The deal prevents Ms. Bibi from leaving the country while the

case is reviewed and appealed, a process that could add years of detention to the eight she spent on death row.



## THE MALTA ESCAPE

Payne & Jones - Book 9

### AN ANCIENT TREASURE:

While visiting the scenic country of Malta, Payne and Jones bump into old friend, who has come to the islands to search for a long-lost treasure the Knights Hospitallers, an organization that dates back to the First Crusade in 1099 AD.

### A VENGEFUL CRIMINAL:

When Ivan Volkov—the ruthless leader of a Russian crime syndicate—betrayed, he is willing to do anything to get retribution. Protected by a coterie of hackers and henchmen, he travels to the Mediterranean where he leaves a trail of bodies in his wake.

### A FINAL SHOWDOWN:

Before leaving Malta, Volkov learns about the ancient hoard, one with possible ties to Paul I and the Russian Empire. With pride and riches on the line, he focuses his wrath on the only people who stand in his way. But Payne and Jones refuse to back down as they try to locate one of the most important treasures of antiquity, while battling one of the world's most dangerous criminals in a deadly fight to the finish. **BUY THE BOOK** [Amazon](#), [Amazon UK](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), [Google](#), [iBooks](#), [iBooks UK](#), [Kobo](#), [Signed Books](#), [Waterstones](#)



**2007** *The former Prime Minister of Malta Lawrence Gonzi being presented with an Aboriginal boomerang by Mr Agius, also in the picture are Lord Mayor Harbison and Francis Tabone, former Malta High Commissioner for Australia. Photos: Austin Tufigno.*

## The Maltese-Aborigines community Charles of Valletta set up in Adelaide

That the Maltese get everywhere is a well-worn adage. That one of them manages to single-handedly create a community of about 700 Maltese-Aborigines, however, is the kind of novelty that only rears its head when a Prime Minister is in town. At the Adelaide Victorian Town Hall, the second stop of Lawrence Gonzi's two-week tour of Australia in 2007, siblings Josie (now deceased) and Bob Agius made a point of welcoming the Prime Minister in their three native tongues and presenting him with an Aboriginal boomerang.

The man behind all this, Charles, a Maltese migrant thought to be from Valletta, has long passed away. And so has his Aboriginal wife, Laura. But his Maltese spirit is very much alive and kicking in their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, as well as all the rest. Bob and Josie's dearest wish now is to visit Malta for the first time, so they can find out where their father lived and where he is buried.

Seventy-two-year-old Bob told *The Times*: "I would love to walk on the ground where he was born and go to where he was buried. I am half Aborigine and half Maltese. Oh my word, no one could make me say otherwise. No one can change that." The problem is that neither Bob nor any member of the Aborigine Agius family know where to look, since Charles parted with their mother and returned to Malta. "I think he was well into his 80s when he died, but we don't know the details and would love to find out." Charles had originally married a Maltese woman in Malta, but emigrated to Australia in around 1930 before marrying Laura in March 1939.

They had four sons, followed by three daughters, and he worked in the workshops on the Islington railway before leaving the family. "I never met many Maltese because I spent much more time with my mother's people. And it was hard for us because of the way the law was back then which separated black Aborigines from whites; the Australians looked down on us and didn't even allow us to speak our language." However, he was in the company of a few



hundred Maltese in the town hall yesterday, and they were all captivated by the development and proliferation of the Agius family. The boomerang he handed to the Prime Minister of Malta was made by a group of Aborigines Bob is affiliated with. "That is a gift from the Aboriginal people of Australia, not from the Australians. My father was a strong man so that Maltese must be strong people," he said.

## Bahrija: Malta's unspoilt countryside at its best



Bahrija is a small rural village in the limits of Rabat in the Western part of Malta. It has a population of around 3,000 that is gradually increasing with time. The name Bahrija translates to 'a moth' in English. There are two churches present, one of which is not used, and another one built in 1984, dedicated to Saint Martin of Tours, whose festa is celebrated on the 11th of November. During this day, several Maltese go along with the tradition and give a bag of mixed fruits and nuts to all children. An annual fair is held every Sunday following this feast, where a variety of goods are given away in a

number of lotteries.

Located on high grounds, Bahrija is exposed to the cold winds coming from the north over the sea, and therefore has cooler weather than the rest of the island. There are panoramic views from this village, covering the north of Malta as well as the South West of Gozo, and if you're lucky, on days with good visibility, you can even see Sicily. In the southern side of Bahrija is the Qlejja Valley with its ridge having rock-cut water cisterns and silos dating from the Bronze Age (c. 1400 B.C.). These remains are a fairly steep climb up a rugged hill, but the hike is worth even for the views alone. The most important finds from this site are in the National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta.



Bahrija is well known for the beauty of its surrounding countryside, there are numerous walking treks. You can explore Fomm ir-Rih for a cliff walk, or explore the Victoria Lines starting from the Kuncizzjoni. There is also a farming community, growing mostly growing grape vines. St Martin of Tours new Bahrija Church near the church there are not many mini craters but lower down the hill they start to appear. Bahrija Malta has mini craters or birth of rock formations in a field near the new church field. were these formed by EDM in an Electric Universe, are they an electric or plasma discharge or something else? this is a good area for mini craters and certainly goes into the classification as a craterland. The village of Bahrija Malta is built on a rolling hilltop and has a large crater on one side of the hill (with mini craters beside it and a rim shot crater attached) and these mini craters or building rock blocks on the other.



### JOE 'STRONGMAN' FALZON AT 86 Maria Muscat

He is 86 years old, and 40 years ago he was known as Joe 'Strongman' Falzon who became popular with his company, The Magnificent Seven. Despite his age, Joe Falzon, still trains by doing difficult exercises every day because he says that this is the only way he can live a happy and healthy life. Joe Falzon no longer carries out the feats he used to up

until recently, to show how strong he is. However, at 86, he is still very healthy and lives in his small house in Marsascula where he has a lot of mementos and photos with actor Steve Reeves, whom he admires greatly. When he used to do these feats, Joe used to even risk his life. "The one where I suffered the most was when I did a 12 hour show on a bed of nails, I was in excruciating pain with the nails coming in and out, and the whole village of Zejtun witnessed it."

He took part in several stunts to show his extraordinary strength: he pulled an airplane, lifted a car, cars were driven over him while laying on broken glass, and he held on to two horses who were pulling him in separate directions. Joe showed us the photos of his ten children, who used to do acrobatic shows with him. While we were speaking to him, Joe showed us that he is still physically strong, despite his age. He told us that daily exercise keeps him strong and he advises everyone to make exercise a part of their daily routine. "When you walk 20 minutes every day, you will not feel miserable. Those who train do not fall sick, that is my advice." Joe helps other young people to follow in his steps and advises Dylan Callus, weightlifting champion, and Tony Farrugia.

Together with his wife, and while smoking a pipe near the seaside, Joe Strongman Falzon is a living legend which is etched in Maltese history



## .And when the saint comes marching in!

The shock a saint feels when he descends on earth to observe how his feast is celebrated in our country was overwhelming. A saint who finds a small boy as his only ally and the rest of the town against him.

This is a new spectacular social comedy about feasts, with the inclusion of popular band marches customarily heard in feasts from our bands. In this work the difference between the original aim of feasts and how we

quite often transform them to fit our purposes is evident.

St Crispin came to know from someone in heaven how well his feast was celebrated. Saints are well aware how feasts are pompously organised in their honour in Malta.

This third century saint, St Crispin, is venerated by a feast in one of the island's localities. He is a saint who lived in poverty, was martyred and venerated as the patron saint of cobblers.

This saint told St Peter that his wish was that for once he could descend to enjoy his feast on earth, or to be more precise, in our country. St Peter was opposed to Crispin's idea, because he was well aware how Malta's feasts are not wholesomely religious. Nevertheless, Crispin's pleas were heard and Peter gave in. Everything was to Crispin's heart's content. The world changed since his last sojourn in it. In this locality, the streets are decorated sumptuously for his feast, and the place could not be more delightful. This heartens Crispin as regardless of what St Peter told him, there was nothing that one could complain about. Crispin is delighted to hear the approaching band marches. He falls instantly in love with the distant music and tries to imagine the praises to God sung to such sweet melodies.

But he gets a cold shower when the marching band approaches nearby while 'his' supporters were singing dispreparative lyrics towards 'the other side', St Catald that is.

St Catald and St Crispin are great friends in heaven. He also notices that brawls are easy to occur in these marches. However, how do the locals greet him? Do they accept him in their feast? Do they believe him when he tells them he is indeed St Crispin?

Written by Joe Julian Farrugia and directed by Mario Micallef, Festa tal-Qaddisin, Hadd ma jista' għalina! has a melange of well-known actors and some other new ones, including Renato Dimech, Joe Quattromani, Manuel Cassar, Marvic Cordina, Silvio Axisa, Aiken Buhagiar, Jurgen Ciantar, Shelby Aquilina, Claudia Mizzi, Dolan Debattista, Patrick Tanti, Veronica Mizzi, Josette Ellul, Orietta Cardona and Jake Cauchi. (timesofmalta.com)



## The 15-year-old Maltese student performs Paloma Faith's Only Love Can Hurt Like This Lina Psaila

**GAIA Cauchi is only 15-year-old and has already competed in Eurovision as well as appearing on TV.**

Here's everything you need to know about the young singer...

The 15-year-old Malta student will perform Paloma Faith's Only Love Can

Hurt Like This tonight in a bid to herself a place in the live shows

**Who is Gaia Cauchi?** Gaia was born in Malta in 2003, making her 15 years of age.

Despite her young age, Gaia had previously had a life-changing chance at stardom after taking to the Eurovision stage in 2013.

Representing her home country of Malta, Gaia performed original track The Start on stage in Kiev, Ukraine that year. Even though she was only 11 at the time, Gaia was picked from thousands of hopefuls to win the annual song contest with a phone in vote covering every nation in the competition.

She had also appeared on TV two years before that on Maletese TV show Ti Lascia Una Canzone, won the junior version of the Sanremo Italian song festival, and the International Achievement Award at the Malta Music Awards in 2013.

## A CURIOUS DISCOVERY IN ZEJTUN



Skeletons found in hidden Żejtun corridor reported the Times of Malta on Tuesday, 15 April 1969. A photo of sacristan Ġann Mari Debono holding a skull in his hand accompanied the news of this remarkable discovery which up to this day is still shrouded in mystery and imbued with controversy.

I have been investigating and researching this find, often by interviewing persons who declared to have been involved in this discovery. My findings were discussed during a national symposium which was organized by Wirt iż-Żejtun in 2014 and later published in the book *The Turkish Raid of 1614* which was issued by the same NGO.

I never got the opportunity to talk to Ġann Mari Debono since he passed away in 2001, at the age of 78. Therefore, I accepted gladly the invitation of his eldest son Charles Debono who offered to share with me his father's story.

"My grandmother had many children and so my father was brought up by his uncle Pawlu and his wife Beneditta Fenech. Pawlu was the sacristan of the parish church of St Catherine in Żejtun and he often took my father with him while he was at work. Soon, my father got very fond of this job and he gave a hand to his uncle whenever he could. Eventually, when Pawlu died, my father took over his duties and he became the new sacristan." Along the years, the old church of St Gregory which originally was the parish church of the village, had become neglected.

"There was nothing but a few farmhouses in the area. However, when a housing estate was built in proximity to this church, it made sense to revamp this building to provide service to the inhabitants who lived close by. Since my father was considering leaving his job at the parish church, Fr Ġwann Palmier, who was responsible for St Gregory's church and also a friend of his, offered him a job there. Soon, my father was appointed as the sacristan of this church and together with Fr Palmier, they began to restore the place back to its glory."

"My father was blessed with a curious nature and a strong determination. He had often listened to the rumours of the old villagers who insisted that there were some people that were buried around the dome of St Gregory's church. He tried hard to locate this area, especially while doing maintenance work around the dome but he never succeeded."

Time would reveal that this was an impossible task since the human remains were actually buried around the roof and not around the dome.

"There was a raised stone close to the exit of the stairway's room which led to the roof. My father often commented that it looked unusual and out of place. He was convinced that there was something beneath it. One day, there were some men doing maintenance work on the roof and he asked them to try to remove it."

"Once the stone was removed, it was clear that it was covering an opening which led into the church. When my father entered into this space, he found his way to a small chamber which led to U-shaped passages that ran around the roof. Inside the corridors, he found several human remains. I remember him coming home on that day, full of excitement and telling us 'I found them! I finally found them! I will take you to see them!'"

When Charles visited the passages with his father, he noticed that the skeletons seemed to be lined up near each other along the corridors, as if someone had arranged them in that way. There was about 3 centimetres of dust which had collected in the corridors along the years during which the passages were blocked and closed away.

Within this dust, a wooden shoe sole with a high heel, a small gilded wooden cross of Byzantine design, odd bits of a gilded wooden frame (perhaps an icon), three coins: two bronze with the cross of the Order, the other gold, but very worn out that it cannot be deciphered, pieces of pottery of the 16-17th century, fragments of animal bones, and a part of a chain mail armour vest, were discovered.

"My father found these passages in pitch darkness but soon he noticed that there were stones blocking five narrow loopholes in the thick walls. Once he removed these stones, he realized that three of them were pointing directly at St Thomas Bay and Marsascalea while the other two looked out at Marsaxlokk and Birżebbuġa."

To avoid them being trodden, Debono picked up all the human bones and stacked them at the end of the third corridor. Yet the story does not end there....



“My father was sure that there was another entrance to these passages within the church itself. He pondered this idea and made several attempts to trace it out. Eventually he came upon a wall cupboard which was situated in an area along the winding staircase and seemed to be of no use.

He decided to ask his friend Ġanni Vella, who was known as Ġanni l-ġgant (Ġanni the giant), to bring one of his mason's tools; a huge iron nail with which building stones were kept in place. He knocked on the wall cupboard with this tool and suddenly, this feature moved out of the wall, revealing another entrance to these passages. It is from this entrance that people get in to view these passages nowadays.”

In 1978, paleopathological studies were done on these human remains by Seshadri Ramaswamy and Joseph Leslie Pace. These experts concluded that the bones appeared to have been exhumed from a cemetery and placed in the passages. However, others find this conclusion hard to believe and they insist that these remains possibly belong to a group of people who were trapped in these corridors whilst hiding there during an Ottoman attack on the village in

1614.

Every Wednesday after Easter, the traditional feast of St Gregory is celebrated in this historical church in Żejtun. Probably few of those attending are aware of the secret passages and the human skeletons lying within.

Considering that 49 years have passed from this discovery and that several scientific tools are now available to provide more conclusive results, including perhaps dna tests to trace family ancestry, isn't it time to resolve this mystery by identifying who are these people and how they ended up in these passages. (This feature was published in the Sunday Times of Malta issued on 25 March 2018)

## Open-air opera based on the legend of St Dimitri



Qasba Zejt – is the title of an open-air opera taking place later this month, organised by the Gharb Local Council and the Għaqda Muzikali Vitztazzjoni.

Opera enthusiasts are invited to attend this special evening of live opera in a unique setting, away from a theatre, in fact, at the Pjazza taz-Zjara tal-Madonna, Gharb

Main Square, Gozo. Written by Mr. Sebastian Saliba, and with music by Maestro Raymond Sciberras -Qasba Zejt is an original opera based on the legend of St. Dimitri. The live orchestra will be conducted by Maestro Jason Camilleri, and vocal director is Mariella Spiteri Cefai. The artistic director is George Mizzi. Roger Tirazona will interpret the part of Dimitri, while Georgina Gauci will play Zgugina. Other soloists are Ruth Portelli, Marvic Cini and Sienna Cremona. This performance of Qasba Zejt will be on Friday, the 23rd of November, starting at 7.30pm under the patronage of President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca. This opera will be held with the support of the Ministry for Gozo, the Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government and the Malta Tourism Authority. A limited number of seats are available. Seats can be reserved in advance on 79492667 or by email to [qasbazejt@gmail.com](mailto:qasbazejt@gmail.com)

**LEGEND OF SAINT DIMITRI** An old woman named Zgugina lived with her son in an old village of Gharb in Gozo. They lived close to the chapel of San Dimitri and Zgugina would go there pray for San Dimitri to offer protection to her son. It was a time when pirates would often attack the Maltese islands. One day a ship full of pirates landed near Gharb. These pirates attacked the village and also the son in chains as a slave. Zgugina went into the chapel and prayed in front of the painting of San Dimitri and made a vow that if he would save her son she would light a votive lamp everyday in the chapel.

The story says that at this point Zgugina saw the painting moving, and out of it came San Dimitri on his white horse. The Saint went on the sea chasing the pirates' ship. Zgugina continued praying and some time later Dimitri returned with Zgugina's son in his arm, and the Saint went back in the painting. Zgugina continued to light the votive lamp each day of her life. Many years passed, and an earthquake shocked the land and the chapel fell into the sea where it lay undamaged on the seabed. The legend says that fishermen still see the light from Zgugina's candle from underwater



Father Leonard Testa's birthday cake. Fr. Testa is with the founding members of the George Cross Falcons Community Club, Gringila, Wollongong NSW Polly Magro, Peter Micallef, Joe Magro and George Bartolo

. A big thank you to all our readers for their support in sending us an acknowledgement, email of thanks, articles, comments, suggestions and contributions From all over the world.

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This photo appears on Facebook of Louis Parnis NSW (GCFCC President)

## WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE ..... IT'S DYING

The world's 6004 languages are dying off quickly and up to half of them will probably become extinct during the next century, experts predict. "I call this a catastrophe - the rate of loss of mankind's linguistic diversity," said Michael Krauss of the University of Alaska.

The forces conspiring against native tongues now seem to be largely electronic. Satellite television, cellular telephones and the Internet all let people speak to each other instantly all over the world. However, linguists urge the preservation of small languages as second, or even third, languages, rather than allowing them to be swallowed up by English, Arabic, Spanish and other major languages. We should care. The world will be less interesting, less beautiful.

It is said that in prehistoric times, humans probably spoke between 10,000 and 15,000 languages. This is now down to about 6000 and dropping fast.

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