

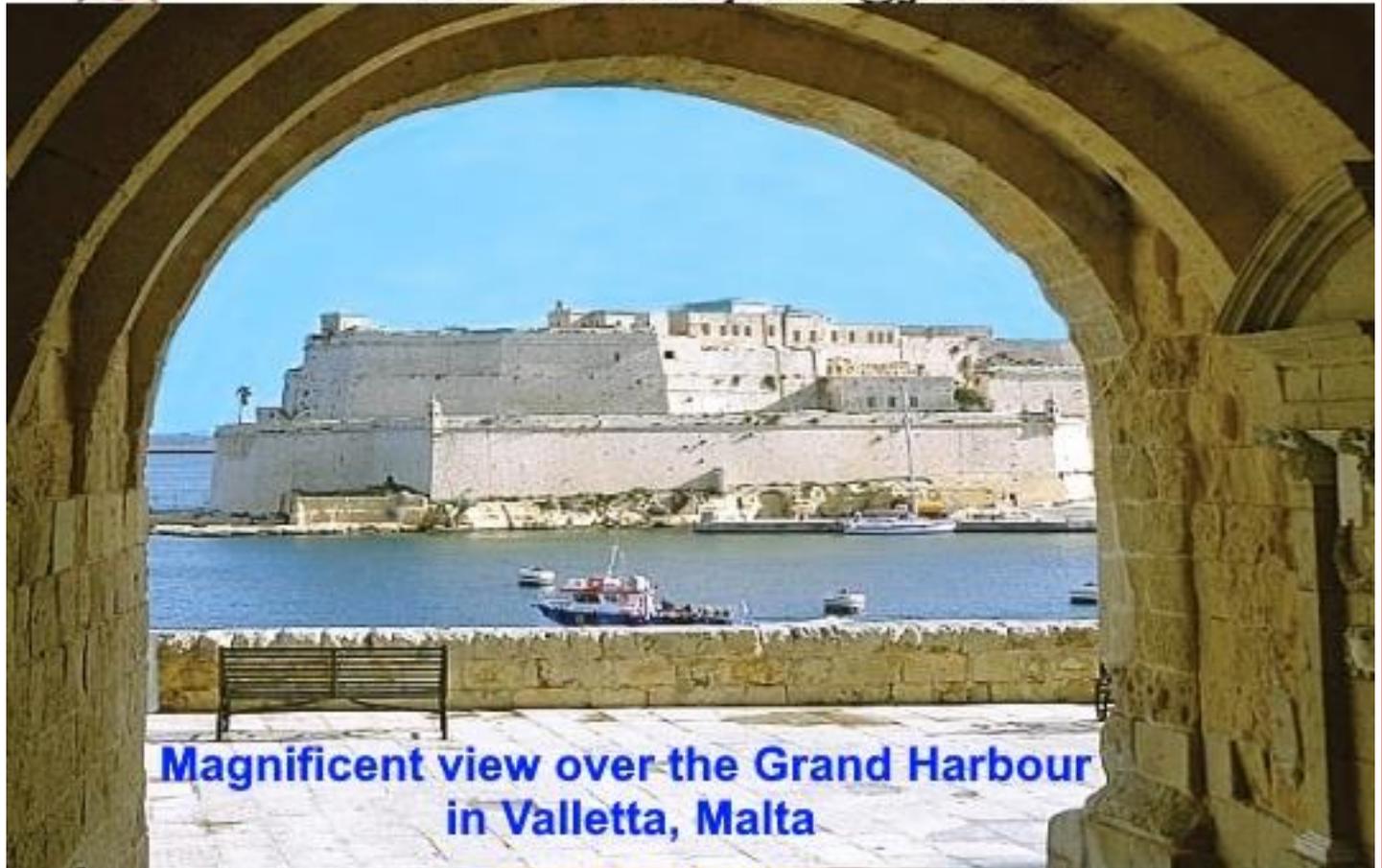
# Maltese e-Newsletter



**The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora**

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**Magnificent view over the Grand Harbour in Valletta, Malta**



**FRUIT IN MALTA  
LOQUATS  
NASPLI**



**A PLEA FROM A REFUGEE**

(Photo: James Bianchi/MediaToday)

## Failed asylum seekers with roots in Malta can now apply for residence

Identity Malta will grant Specific Residence Authorisation to long-term immigrants who are not eligible for international protection but cannot be returned to their country of origin  
by **Kurt Sansone**



*A migrant had begged the President in 2017 to intervene after government stopped issuing temporary protection to failed asylum seekers (Photo: James Bianchi/MediaToday)*

Migrants left in limbo after government suspended a policy to grant temporary humanitarian protection to failed asylum seekers, can now benefit from a new residence scheme.

The Specific Residence Authorisation was announced this afternoon by Home Affairs Minister Michael Farrugia and Reforms Parliamentary Secretary Julia Farrugia.

The new policy replaces the Temporary Humanitarian Protection New (THPN) policy of 2010, which was stopped two years ago amid concerns raised by migrant advocacy groups.

Government said the new system was targeted at a number of THPN certificate holders and other people who are not eligible for international protection but cannot be sent back to their country of origin. The new system will be managed by Identity Malta and not the Refugee Commissioner. Beneficiaries of this status will no longer be required to obtain a certificate from the Refugee Commissioner every year.

Eligible applicants will be able to apply for a two-year renewable residence permit, giving the individuals more stability. All applications for a residence permit will continue to be vetted by the Police Immigration Office. The government insisted the policy changes did not mean that all rejected asylum seekers will be entitled to a regular status in Malta.

the government is recognising that a number of persons have been actively contributing to Maltese society for several years, have learnt Maltese or English, have built relationships with Maltese citizens...  
*government statement*

“The government’s position remains that those persons who are not in need of international protection should return to their country of origin. Nevertheless, the government is recognising that a number of persons have been actively contributing to Maltese society for several years, have learnt Maltese or English, have built relationships with Maltese citizens and a life on our island,” the statement said.

It added that government was not insensitive to these situations and acknowledged the need to have a standard procedure in place, which would treat such persons with dignity.

“The policy is intended to reduce social exclusion among migrant communities and recognise the efforts of migrants who are actively contributing to our society,” the government said.

The changes form part of government’s drive to implement the principles set out in the Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan Vision 2020.

The Home Affairs Ministry said the policy would not be able to address all issues raised throughout the consultation process but described it as “a good step forward towards mending a system which has been broken for far too long”.



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



We thank all our readers, supporters and contributors. You are keeping this journal alive

## Adelaide gives thanks for Maltese-born Bishop of Darwin Charles Gauci

*Jenny Brinkworth*

Adelaide's Catholic community gave thanks with gusto for the ordination of Bishop Charles Gauci when he returned to his home town this month.



St Francis Xavier's Cathedral was overflowing with family, friends and parishioners who gave a standing ovation before pouring into the Cathedral Hall for a joyful celebration on October 7. The previous evening, Catholics from the south came together for a Vigil Mass celebrated by their former pastor at St Luke's

Church, Noarlunga.

Only three weeks into his new role as Bishop of Darwin, the Maltese-born priest said Adelaide would always be home but he now had two homes. He said he was on a steep 'learning curve' as he familiarised himself with the vast diocese and its diverse Catholic population, one third of which is Indigenous.

While Bishop Greg O'Kelly SJ reminded him that Uluru was part of the Port Pirie Diocese, Bishop Gauci joked that it might be a topic for discussion. "No it's not," Bishop O'Kelly retorted.

On a serious note, during his homily Bishop Gauci said in the short time he had been in Darwin he had already heard about the tragedy of suicides amongst the First Peoples and seen discrimination in action.

He warned against having preconceived ideas and urged the faithful to follow Jesus' call to be "child-like" and "open".

"It's so easy to get confused about values, about what is real. We hear of scandals, abuses...and we can lose our bearings, that's why we are gathered here today to be reminded of what is most important, to do what Jesus did, to take time to pray, to reflect, and be open to the friendship of God and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit."

Referring to "fake news" and unjustified attacks on Pope Francis, he urged people to "take 10 minutes of the day to spend with Jesus, to read the Scriptures, to find out all about our faith from the right sources".

"Be open to the wonder of each moment; we are all far from being the ideal but by the grace of God we don't give up," he said.

"It's not being so puritanical we condemn others, that's not Christian, but on the other hand we don't just say 'it doesn't matter'.

### Maltese e-Newsletter



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 Malta Migration Museum - [Maltese/Canadian Archives - Toronto](#)  
 Gozo National Library - Website - [www.ozmalta.com](#)

## THE FORTRESS ISLAND - MALTA



The comings and goings of foreign forces throughout Malta's history have created a legacy of military architecture that is testament to Malta's strategic maritime importance. In fact, after spending even just a few days on the Maltese Islands, it will come as no surprise to hear that Malta has often been called the 'Fortress Island'. While the days of savage invaders and Ottoman fleets are long gone, the retired fortifications still stand strong; scattered across the Islands and keeping a protective eye on the Maltese coast.

Largely from two periods in Maltese history, most fortifications date back to the time of the Knights of St. John (1530 – 1798) and to the time of the British (1800 – 1964). From coastal forts and Valletta's bastions to the Grand Palace and war museums, wherever you go in Malta you are sure to discover reminders of wartime battles and military crusades.

**FORTIFYING THE GRAND HARBOUR** - Malta's past is strongly tied to the Grand Harbour, a natural harbour that has been in use as a place of refuge since ancient times. The Upper and Lower Barakka Gardens, two beautiful and serene public gardens in Valletta, are the perfect points from which to absorb the grandeur of the harbour. The northeast facing mouth of the harbour is flanked by Fort St. Elmo on the Valletta side and Fort Ricasoli on the side of the Three Cities; these are the fortified cities of Cospicua, Vittoriosa (also known as Birgu) and Senglea, which sit on the opposite side of the Grand Harbour to Valletta.

Starting life as a small fort in 1488, the arrival of the Knights of St. John in Malta saw Fort St. Elmo reinforced and strengthened over the years. It eventually served as the site for the heroic defence of Malta during the Great Siege in 1565, when the Knights and the Maltese fought and beat the invading Ottoman Empire in one of the bloodiest and most celebrated events of sixteenth-century Europe. Today, Fort St. Elmo holds the 'In Guardia' and 'Alarme' military parades and historical re-enactments in full period costume for visitors to enjoy.

The Three Cities are dominated by Fort St. Angelo, which stands at the top of Birgu. The town's other name of 'Vittoriosa' or 'Victorious City' refers directly to Malta's triumph in the Great Siege and pays heed to the central role of Fort St. Angelo in the historic protection of Malta. Previously known as 'Castello a Mare' or 'fort by the sea', the fort stands on the site of a previously fortified Roman settlement and served as the seat of the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John upon their arrival in Malta in 1530. The fort's legendary status is due to its heroic victory over the Saracen armada during the Great Siege, a status upheld by the British who retained the fort's importance as a military installation during the Second World War. While currently under restoration, Fort St. Angelo is soon to be opened as a major attraction for visitors to the Maltese Islands. A view over the fort's exterior magnificence can still, however, be enjoyed from the Barakka Gardens in Valletta.

### Malta's Coastal Towers



Lookout posts and watch towers line the coast of Malta. These towers were built by the Knights in the seventeenth century to serve as an early warning system against invaders. Each tower was strategically placed in sight of neighbouring towers and, as soon as one tower spotted signs of the enemy, a fire would be lit and then seen by the next tower, which would subsequently light its own fire to carry message of warning all around the island. This coastal guarding system was sixty years in the making

under the guidance of three Grand Masters, Wignacourt, Lascaris and De Redin. A number of these towers still stand, including Wignacourt Tower in St. Paul's Bay, which is now looked after by volunteers and open daily to visitors before lunch and in the evenings.

St. Agatha's Tower, also known as the Red Tower because of the painted colour of its façade, was built in 1649 as the furthest outpost from Valletta and the signal post for communication with Malta's sister island of Gozo. Located on the outskirts of the seaside village of Mellieha in the northwest of Malta, the tower is an impressive structure with a flight of steps leading up to a drawbridge and then to the main entrance of the tower. The tower continued to be manned by the British during the World Wars and now serves as a radar station under the Armed Forces of Malta. The tower is looked after by volunteers and is open to visitors everyday. The area around the tower is wonderful for walks with spectacular all-round views of Gozo, Comino and Ghadira Bay in Mellieha.

**The British Fortifications**



Upon their arrival in Malta in 1880, the British made use of a large part of Malta's existent fortifications but also went on to construct new forts for increased defence. Fort Madalena in Mdliena was built during the reign of Queen Victoria as part of the Victoria Lines defences that stretch across the island. The fort was later used by the Royal Air Force as a communications post and, in keeping with its original status as a protector of Malta, the fort is currently used as the headquarters of the St. John Rescue Corps and falls under the

responsibility of the Maltese Armed Forces.

Built at around the same time as Fort Madalena between 1878 and 1886, Fort Rinella was constructed as the most technologically advanced war machine of the time, capable of protecting Malta from the supremacy of the Italian navy. The fort is located on the eastern side of the Grand Harbour in the town of Kalkara and is currently open to visitors from Tuesday to Sunday. Tours include historical re-enactments and a film show about the fort's history. Perhaps the most intriguing display at Fort Rinella, however, is the 100-tonne gun with a barrel reaching almost ten metres in length.



Delving deep into the uniqueness of Malta's rich history through a trip to one or more of Malta's fortifications is definitely a worthwhile holiday activity. Wartime enthusiasts will be enthralled by memories of Malta's military past and even those with no prior knowledge will enjoy the images of soldierly prowess Malta's fortifications arouse.

**OUR MOTTO:** We strive to build bridges between communities and destroy barriers.

The Journal of the Maltese living in Malta and abroad

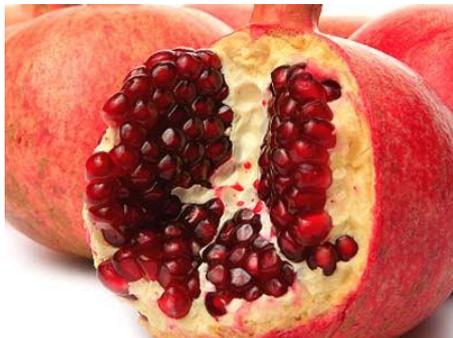
Another edition of the **MALTESE NEWSLETTER**

**UNITED WE STAND**

Together we stand,  
divided we fall  
Come on now  
people, let's get on  
the ball and work  
together

## Two more Maltese fruit - Pomegranates and Loquats

### Rummien u Naspli



These are two more of my childhood fruits which I miss quite a lot, although the first one shows up in our food stores once a year. The pomegranate, also called the *Punica granatum* is an edible berry and is between a lemon and a grapefruit in size, with a rounded hexagonal shape, and has thick reddish skin. The exact number of seeds in a pomegranate can vary from 200 to about 1400 seeds, contrary to some beliefs that all pomegranates have exactly the same number of seeds. Each seed has a surrounding water-laden pulp ranging in color from white to deep red or purple. The seeds are embedded in a white, spongy, astringent pulp. They grow in abundance in the Middle East and warm European countries. The pomegranate has been mentioned in the book

of Exodus and has many benefits, even though some people find them annoying as every berry has a seed, which is edible, and as we said about the prickly pear, let nature take care of the rest.



The loquat also known as *Eriobotrya japonica*, is a fruit tree in the family Rosaceae, indigenous to central China. It was formerly thought to be closely related to the genus *Mespilus*, (thus the Maltese word, naspli) and is still sometimes known as the Japanese medlar. Loquat fruits, growing in clusters, are oval, rounded or pear-shaped, the size of a plum, with a smooth yellow or orange skin. The succulent, tangy flesh is white, yellow or orange and very sweet, and with a brown pit. The skin, though thin, can be peeled off manually if the fruit is ripe. The fruits are the sweetest when soft and orange. The flavour is a mix of peach, citrus and

mild mango.

## Mary's Birthday



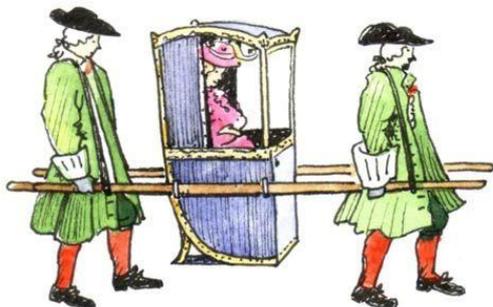
Maria Bambina Statue at Xaghra Parish in Gozo, Malta

On the 8 September the Maltese people celebrate the feast of the birthday of the Blessed Mother. She was conceived in St Anne's womb on December 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and to follow the duration of a human pregnancy, the church celebrates her birth date. Many countries, including Italy and Spain as well as Malta celebrate this holy day with images and statues of the baby Mary, although the statues venerated in Malta are that of a young girl, all of which known as Maria Bambina (the little child Mary.)



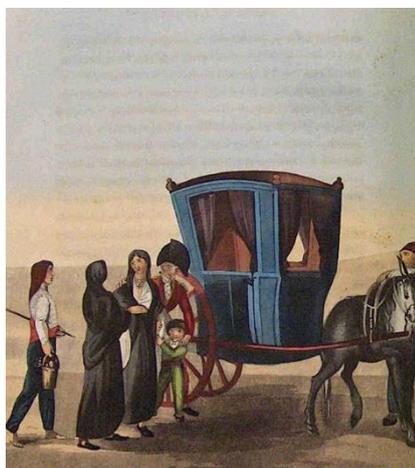
In Malta we also commemorate the occasion of two major victories at war. The first one was the victory of the Maltese and the Knights of Malta against the Turks, the Ottoman Empire in 1565, and the second one was the end of Fascism and Nazism at the height of World War II, a time of terrible suffering for the Maltese people. Fr. Julian's Blog

## ***MALTA EARLY MEANS OF TRANSPORT***



Up to the mid 1800s the only means of human transport was the horse, cart or kaless (caleche). Privileged people also used the Sedan Chair.

The Sedan Chair known in Maltese as *is-suggetta*, was a grand enclosed vehicle borne on two poles. It had a door at the front and a window on each side and required two strong men, who were often harnessed, to carry it, or at times even four if the distance travelled was particularly long. Utilized by privileged people, these highly prestigious showpieces were in use primarily during the 17th and 18th centuries, and were at times emblazoned with a coronet or coat-of-arms of the owner. It allowed people to negotiate muddy streets without getting their clothes and shoes dirty.



The Kaless (Maltese Caleche) consisted of a cabin on a pair of large wheels on the rear end. The wheels were made of hard solid wood covered by a thick iron rim. It was drawn by a single mule or horse and driven by a man on foot who kept pace with the animal. All the weight of the Kaless was borne by the horse or mule.

The Kaless was introduced to Malta at the end of the eighteenth century, during the time of the Knights. It was very popular in the streets of Valletta and in the three cities around the Grand Harbour.

The cabin used to be painted black or dark green sometimes panelled with the coat of arms of the owner. Sometimes it would sport a lamp or two allowing the Kaless to be used by night too.

The interior was upholstered with very fine fabric or damask. Curtains put behind the windows served to embellish the Kaless and offered privacy and protection from the summer elements.

The ride was rough since the cabin did not have any spring suspensions but was slung on leather thongs. This caused the cabin to swing a lot. As such they are described by Captain Thomas Walsh in his *Journal of the Late Campaign in Egypt* (London, 1803) as being '*very clumsy awkward carriages...which shake the unfortunate passengers to pieces*'

Il-Karozzin or "The Horsedrawn Carriage" was a popular means of transport in the Maltese islands in olden days. It was introduced to Malta in the mid nineteenth century and unlike the Kaless the carriage rider could drive the carriage sitting. This means of transport was a common scene and one could see and hear the sound of hooves beating and clicking on the ground as the horsedrawn carriage passed through villages and towns, through the countryside and also along coast roads of the Maltese islands. The poor people depended on the horsedrawn carriage to take them on errands outside their village. The Horse Drawn Carriage was also used on special feasts and occasions such as Carnival or a wedding ceremony. Today the horsedrawn carriage is popular among tourists who would like to go round the old capital city Mdina and Valletta.



### Trivia Night with a Maltese twist!!

at Maltese Community Council of Victoria

477 Royal Pde Parkville , Melbourne, VIC 3052

Sat. 1 December 2018 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm At the MCCV 477 Royal Pde Parkville Phone 9387 8922 \$27.46

Book the babysitter and come along to Trivia Night with a Maltese twist! Organised by the **SOCIAL GROUP MALTESE SINGLES IN MELBOURNE 40+** and supported by the **Maltese Community Council of Victoria** in Parkville, this event is open to all but you must be 40+ Get a team together and book a table for a fun filled night of games, great food and great company. Come along and enjoy some pastizzi and other traditional Maltese finger food while your table tries to win the major prize!! BYO Alcohol !! All you trivia buffs out there get ready for some healthy competition! There will also be games and raffles on the night so be sure to bring your wallets and good cheer!!

[Maltese Singles living in Melbourne 40\\*](#)

We are a social group on Facebook, focusing on keeping the Maltese Spirit alive!

## THE OMNIBUS in MALTA 1856



The first Omnibus was brought to Malta in October 1856 from England by a certain Ċensu Attard.

A month later on 28 November, the public was informed that this omnibus, which carried 16 passengers, was expected to start operating on Sunday 30 November 1856.

The timetable was to be as follows:

**6.30 a.m:** Departure from Lija to Valletta Belt passing

from Balzan, Birkirkara, San Giuseppe (Hamrun), Tas-Samra, Floriana, Valletta.

**8.00 a.m:** Return trip from Valletta to Lija on the same route.

**3.30 p.m:** Another trip from Lija to Valletta followed by a return trip to Lija

When Ċensu Attard's omnibus started operating on 30 November 1856 it was a success. The fare for a return trip was 5d.

In 1856 Paul Galea and Notary Manuel Catania set up a company to organise Omnibus trips. The company offered £1,500 worth of shares to the public which offer was exhausted by September 1856.

Paul Galea went to France and on 21 October 1856 he bought 6 omnibuses (carrying 27 passengers each) from Paris at a cost of 2,700 Franks. He also bought most of the horses needed to draw these omnibuses. Ten horses were brought onboard the French ship Euphrates on 2 November 1856. Two omnibuses arrived in Malta onboard the French ship Hydaspes on 4 January 1857. Another two omnibuses arrived in Malta on 11 January 1857.

The company started operating on the Lija-Valletta route on 11 January 1857. However, from 19 January 1857 the Company started operating also the St-Julian's to Valletta route. These routes were operated from Monday to Saturday.

The timetable was as follows:

**Valletta-Lija Route:** operating four times a day leaving Valletta at 7.00am, 11.45am, 3.20pm and 4.40pm

**Lija- Valletta Route:** operating four times a day leaving Lija at 7.00am, 8.05am, 1.30pm and 5.30pm.

**Valletta-St Julian's Route:** operating three times a day leaving Valletta at 11.55am, 2.30pm, 4.30pm

**St Julian's Valletta Route:** operating twice a day leaving St Julian's at 6.45am and 4.15pm

The fare from Lija and St Julian's was 4d. The fare from B'Kara was 3d and the fare from Hamrun was 2½d.

On 20 March 1857 the service was extended to the Zebbug-Valletta route. Some trips used to be organised to Mdina and sometimes even to St Paul's Bay.

Submitted by Harry Bugeja – Adelaide, Australia

## Letters To The EDITOR

**Dear Frank, Many thanks for the energy that you spend in producing the Maltese e Newsletter. Having migrated with my parents age 5 in 1954 it provides me with the only close link I have to my home country with a mix of history and current events. Over the last few years I have visited Malta and have spent some time researching my family history. I have made great progress in my discoveries some of which I am sure was unknown to my closest ancestors. I am currently concentrating on my paternal grandfather Emanuele Zahra from Senglea who the first Maltese Crown Sergeant in the Dockyard Constabulary was. Unfortunately, I have been unable to find any documents or records on the role he played and the history of the dockyard police. He and his family lived with other force members in four houses named Sergeants of Police Quarters within the dockyard. I have located where they were from old plans, but the dockyard developments have transformed the area considerably. Many documents were lost after the British left their occupation.**

**Should any of your readers be able to throw some light on the constabulary during the period 1914 to 1945 I would be grateful to receive any information on my email [zahra.joe@gmail.com](mailto:zahra.joe@gmail.com). Thanks again for your work in producing this great newsletter. Regards Joe Zahra**

**Dear Frank I would like to thank you wholeheartedly for sending me regularly the Maltese Journal. Now wonder you have so many readers from all over world enjoying this magnificent magazine which is full of information about the history and culture of our beloved Malta. I wait anxiously to receive and as soon as I receive it, I open it and read it from cover to cover. You are keeping us connected and united.  
John Mangion – President, Maltese Guild of South Australia Inc.**

**I must admit that I am addicted to this journal. It is so informative, easy to read and always something new. I live in Malta, but I still learn a great deal about the history, culture and heritage of our Islands. Please, do not stop publishing this journal.  
J. Camilleri**



I thought of sharing something with you, which you may chose to share with your readers. This year as you may know Malta is - European City of Culture 2018. Both tourists and locals enjoyed a wide variety of cultural entertainment. This October I happened to be in Gozo Malta (being from Gozo). I

was lucky to have had the opportunity to attend some Orchestra Recitals. One of which was at the Piazza of Santa Lucija Gozo.

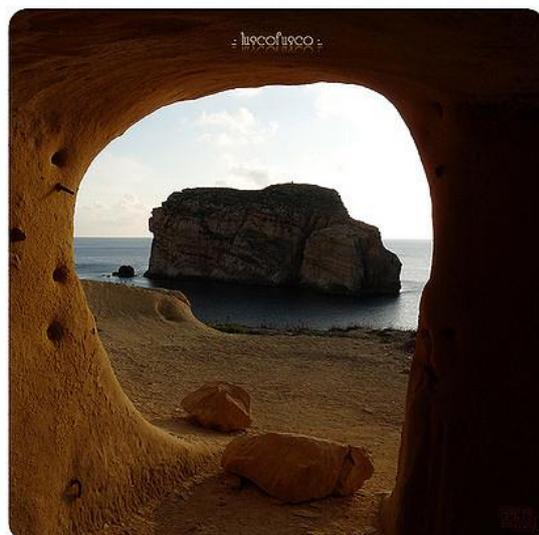
It was a play of Music & Light. Note one photo, the Church bells of Santa Lucia Church in pink, at the time I took this photo. Interestingly enough the orchestra ended the Recital with 'Bells Across The Meadows' by Albert Ketelbey who was inspired to compose this beautiful piece of music after listening to the bells of Santa Lucija Gozo, chiming,

A second photo is that of the procession with the statue (torso) of St Ursola. This procession had stopped taking place for fifty years. This year it recommenced.

The third photo is that of another 'WINDOW' in Gozo ! (we always make it a point to have a spare!!). Thank you so much for your interesting and intuitive Maltese Journal.

In prayers. Sr Georgina Sultana O.P.

The Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of Malta.



FUNGUS ROCK  
(GOZO - MALTA)

## Ara... waslet l-Immakulata!

Ma nistax inhalli tahrab  
minn idejja l-okkażjoni  
bla ma nsellem minn qiegh qalbi  
'l-Immakulata Kuncizzjoni

li fit-tmienja ta' Diċembru  
ta' kull sena tiġi żżurna,  
fuq il-bieb ta' darna thabbat  
u f'daž-żmien araha dduarna.

Ghax ladarba din hi Ommna,  
bil-jedd tiehu hsieb uliedha  
u b'hekk tkompli l-missjoni  
li ghaluha Alla riedha.

Kemm kienu xortihom tajba  
it-twajba Anna u Ġwakkini  
illi taw lid-dinja taghna  
l-Omm li wildet il-Bambin!

U fil-pjan ta' Alla l-Gholi  
Marija twieldet bla htija;  
kif setgħet tkun differenti  
dik li wildet lill-Messija!

F'dawn il-jiem dan qed infakkru –  
privileġġ hekk singulari:  
it-Tnissil t'Ommna Marija...  
fl-istorja xi haġa rari!

L-irhieb tal-Fqajjar t'Assisi  
fil-qalba tal-Belt Victoria  
din il-ġrajja dlonk ifakkru  
bl-akbar pompa, ġieħ u gloriya!

U allura r-Rabat taghna  
jinbidel bhal-lejl min-nhar;  
pilandri, bnadar u statwi,  
dwal, tiżjin, ferħ u sparar.

U fil-knisja helwa taghha  
ċerimonji l-aktar sbieħ,  
damask, linef u gandlieri,  
dehbijiet, fided qatigh!

Fuq kulhadd issaltan statwa  
li jonqosha biss il-kliem  
illi Salvatore Psaila  
naqqax, roqom tul iż-żmien.

Il-Bormliżi wkoll jingħaqdu  
biex isellmu lil Marija  
li dahlet dejjem għalihom  
u żammithom fl-armonija.

U f'Santwarju qadim bosta  
li nsibu mill-Qala 'l ġewwa  
hemm ukoll l-Immakulata  
tbegħidna minn kull hemm u dnewwa.

Ma xtaqtx intemm dawn il-versi  
bla ma nitfa' harsti lejck:  
lill-Qalin u lill-Bormliżi  
kun pronta iġbidhom hdejk.

Tinsiex thares bl-akbar hlewwa  
lejn dawn hutna l-patrijiet  
li t-Tnissil bla tebġha tiegħek  
żammew sod maż-żminijiet!

F'kelma wahda, harstek itfa'  
fuq Malta u Ghawdex taghna;  
jghaddu s-snin, jitgerbu l-iżmna,  
'mma int ibqa' dejjem maghna.

T'Ibnek hares din il-Knisja  
li tinsab imħabbta sewwa;  
la thalliha qatt li togħtor  
għall-assalti tal-ghedewwa

illi jridu jċappsuha  
u jniżżluha għarkupppejha;  
mill-Ġenna fejn int issaltan  
lilha aqbad minn idejha.

Agħti d-dehen lir-Raghajja taghha  
sabiex jagħrfu jmexxuha  
halli tirbah fuq il-halel  
li d-Demonju lesta għaliha!

O Marija Immakulata  
li tnissilt bla ebda htija,  
iġborna lkoll madwarek –  
qalbna fawwar bit-tgawdija

li Ibnek għalina lesta  
wara dan il-Wied tad-Dmugh;  
berrħilna bibien il-Ġenna  
halli niġu ngawduh.

Miegħek wiċċ imb wiċċ niltaqghu,  
ngħixu dejjem ferħanin  
fejn le jsaltnu l-hemm u n-niket,  
fejn ma jghaddi qatt il-hin!

Illum halli lkoll ingħajtu:  
“Evviva l-Immakulata!”.  
Miegħek orbotna għal dejjem  
għaliex inti taghna l-blata!



KAV. JOE M. ATTARD  
Il-Belt Victoria, Ghawdex  
2018

## Proposed 5-star hotel will not affect views of Mdina



Neil Camilleri

In a presentation to The Malta Independent, architect David Xuereb, CEO of QP Management, said that safeguarding of the old city is actually in the best interest of the project of a 5star hotel at Saqqajja, Rabat.

“The developers could have opted for a residential project, which would have generated a higher return on investment, but the idea of the project is that of quality tourism that would actually help Mdina’s UNESCO bid,” Xuereb said, adding that the

area lacked quality accommodation.

He also said that the 5-star hotel project will reduce traffic travelling up Saqqajja Hill and will open up a new public access point to the medieval city. The proposed site encompasses the Tattingers nightclub and two other buildings. The project applicant is Jeffrey Cutajar, the owner of Tattingers.

Xuereb explained that the hotel’s height will not exceed the existing predominant streetscape. While hotels are usually allowed extra floors, the developers in this case were aware of the sensitivity of the site and made sure not to alter the visuals of the area.

The proposed building footprint would take up a small area of ODZ land at the back but the developers point out that, from the front, the new building will be receded and set back to widen the existing road.

Perit Xuereb explained that, when looking at Mdina from the fields below, it looks as if the old city is ‘floating.’ This effect is due to a band of greenery below the city. The proposed hotel will not alter this effect, he said.

The hotel per se will be built with full respect towards the surrounding area, incorporating traditional features such as wrought iron and the traditional Maltese balcony, as well as green building concepts, such as green walls.

The developers want the building to be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified, is an internationally recognized green building certification, Xuereb explained.

Rather than going for the traditional singular hotel building, the architects have designed the façade to give the impression that one is actually looking at a number of different adjacent buildings.

There will be no excavation, Xuereb said, since the hotel will not have a basement or underground car park. However, the applicants are trying to establish, my means of cleaning, what lies beneath the buildings. The process is being carried out in conjunction with the Superintendence for Cultural Heritage.

The old railway tunnel lies under some 20 metre of rock and will not be affected, Xuereb said.

The hotel’s outdoor area would be developed over some agricultural fields that form part of the same parcel of land owned by the applicant.

Asked about the traffic impact, Xuereb explained that the project is envisaged to reduce traffic going up Saqqajja hill. “Since this will be a luxury hotel we envisage that most guests would make use of taxis or other forms of chauffeured transport. The hotel will have a lay-by area, within its boundary, where guests can be picked up and dropped off without disturbing traffic flow on the main road. The lay-by will also be used for goods deliveries,” Xuereb explained.

The developers are also proposing that the government renovates and manages the public car park just across the road. While the car park would remain public, the developers are proposing opening up an access passage that runs through the property and leads up to the Mdina ditch. This would be open to the public, thus creating a new public access point to the city. This would also serve to reduce the number of vehicles going up Saqqajja.

The developers are also encouraging the government to restore the bastions that lie behind the site which, for some reason, were left out of past restoration projects.

## Fresh gbejna **the traditional small round cheese made in Malta**



Gbejniet are available as fresh, dried or peppered... Keith Abela's recipe for fresh gbejniet is quite easy once you have the right equipment and know a few tricks

*Makes 1 gbejna*

### Ingredients

- 500ml sheeps milk
- 4 drops liquid rennet
- 1 tsp fine salt

### Method

1. Preheat water to 51'C. For this you can use a sues vide or a pot of warm water and use a thermometer to check the temperature.
2. Add all the ingredients to a ziplock bag and mix well. Place the bag in the water and leave to cook for 30 minutes.
3. Once the time has passed remove the bag from the water and strain through a sieve to hold back the curds.
4. Leave to drain in the sieve for 5 minutes to remove excess whey.
5. Place the curds into the mold and leave in the fridge to set overnight.



*This recipe first appeared on Gourmet Today, October, 2018.*

## MTV - MUŻIKA **Ela Mangion tiltaqa' mal-President**

**Rapport:** Ruth Castillo

Ġimagħtejn oħra l-kantanta Ela Mangion se tirrappreżenta lil Malta fil-Junior Eurovison, li din is-sena se jsir f'Minsk fil-Belarus.

Sitt ijiem qabel tħalli Malta għal din l-esperjenza, Ela Mangion u d-delagazzjoni tal-PBS iltaqgħu mal-President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca. Il-kantanta ta' tnax-il sena qalet lill-President li qed tipprattika sew għal din l-esperjenza importanti fil-karriera mużikali tagħha.

Ela Mangion spjegat li l-kanzunetta Marchin' On titratta problemi soċjali bħalma huma l-abbuż domestiku, il-bullying u l-effetti tal-gwerer. Dan hu rifless anke fil-video li thejja għall-kanzunetta.

Ela Mangion qalet "il-video ngibet go scrapyard, li tirrappreżenta n-negattività u jiena qisni nirrappreżenat l-pożittività u qisni kull darba qed nagħti l-kurraġġ biex it-tfal jibqgħu għadddejjin b'ħajjithom avolja jiltaqgħu ma' ħafna ostakli."

Marchin' On inkitbet minn Emil Calleja Bayliss u l-kompożitur huwa Cyprian Cassar.

Il-President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca qalet li dan il-festival mhuwiex biss kompetizzjoni imma fissritu bħala esperjenza ta' diplomazija kulturali, li ssaħħaħ il-ħbiberija bejn pajjiż u ieħor. Qalet li Malta, bħala pajjiż zghir, teħtieġ dawn l-opportunitajiet biex iżżid il-viżibilità.

Iċ-Chairman tal-PBS, Tonio Portugese, qal li din ukoll hi l-viżjoni tal-istazzjon nazzjonali, li hu fost l-iżgħar membri tal-European Broadcasting Union. Id-delegazzjoni Maltija fil-Junior Eurovision Song Contest se tkun immexxija mill-kap eżekuttiva tal-PBS, Charles Dalli.

Il-Junior Eurovision gie organizzat għall-ewwel darba fl-2003 fid-Danimarka, meta dakinhar Malta kienet ħadet sehem f'dan il-konkurs u baqgħet tippartecipa sal-2010. Malta kompliet tieħdu sehem mill-2013 sal-lum il-għurnata. Il-finali ta' din is-sena se jsir fil-25 ta' Novembru u se jixxandar dirett fuq TVM.





**JP2 FOUNDATION POPE JOHN PAUL II  
FOUNDATION  
40th Anniversary from the beginning of Pope Saint John  
Paul II Papacy  
Press Release**

Recently, a delegation from the JP2 Foundation made a cordial visit to His Excellency Archbishop Monsignor Alessandro D'ERRICO, Apostolic Nuncio to Malta at the Apostolic Nunciature in Tal-Virtu, Rabat, Malta.

The delegation consisted of Commander Carmel Zammit EOHSJ, President of the JP2 Foundation, Reverend Canon Chevalier Antoine Borg EOHSJ, Chaplin and Mr Eric Joseph Grech, JP2 Foundation Public Relations Officer. As part of the introduction, the delegation informed the Apostolic Nuncio as to the aim of the Foundation as well as its role in connection with Saint John Paul II. Apart from the fact that the Foundation is to keep alive the name of Pope John Paul II, its primary aim is to promote "culture" through collaboration in projects and initiatives which bring together persons of different identities and diverse cultures to create an environment for a common denominator. These initiatives include, but are by no means limited to, the cultural field. This year, the JP2 Foundation has organised twenty events, fifteen of which with international participation and five locally based.

The main subject of the agenda was the commemoration of the first centenary from the birth of Karol Józef Wojtyła and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of him, as the first Pontiff, to visit the the Maltese Islands, both dates coinciding in May 2020. The delegation explained that at the moment, the Foundation is preparing a proposed program which will cover a period of 24 months beginning from May 2019 to May 2021. His Excellency was accompanied by his private secretary Reverend Monsignor Francisco Javuer DIAZ TENZA. **Kav. Joe M Attard – Gozo, Malta**

## POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCES NEW APPOINTMENT FOR ARCHBISHOP SCICLUNA



Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna has been appointed by Pope Francis, as Adjunct Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Holy See.

The Curia, in a statement said that Mgr Scicluna, whilst remaining the Archbishop of Malta, will have a greater role in the Congregation which is responsible to promote and safeguard the doctrine on faith and morals in the Church.

Archbishop Scicluna is at present, a member of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and President of the Special College within the same Congregation, to hear recourses in certain canonical processes. Archbishop Scicluna will travel to Rome on a regular basis to fulfil these duties, and in the absence of the Archbishop, the Auxiliary Bishop, Mgr Joseph Galea-Curmi, will assume the ordinary leadership of the Archdiocese of Malta, the Curia said.



Malta News

## VALLETTA TO HOST SPECTACULAR NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

November 14, 2018 Bay News89.7 Bay, Beautiful Malta, Lovemalta, New Year, Pierre Cordina, Valletta 2018

Malta is set to welcome 2019 in style.

Plans for Valletta's spectacular New Year's

Eve celebrations have been unveiled, with **89.7 Bay** presenter Pierre Cordina leading the official countdown to midnight and the start of 2019.

Thousands of revellers are expected to gather in the city centre for the massive street party, with Maltese singer Ira Losco performing a free concert in St George's Square, featuring all her biggest 89.7 Bay hits. Organisers promised us 'one of the greatest New Year celebrations Valletta has ever seen'.

Malta's culture minister Owen Bonnici said: 'It's a great honour to have such a large scale event which attracts so many people whilst showcasing Maltese talent. 'This was a milestone year for culture and its legacy in our country. 'Through these celebrations, we will continue to give Valletta a European dimension together with other European cities and towns which will also be welcoming the New Year in this manner.'

**Valletta 2018** chairman Jason Micallef told 89.7 Bay: 'This is a special year for Valletta, and it is therefore fitting that we end it with a celebration which is equally special.

'After successfully executing a cultural programme with almost 400 events this year, this event will be one of the last in Valletta 2018's calendar, which, like the rest, will surely remain etched in the European Capital of Culture's legacy.

'Once again, St George's Square will host a huge celebration which will attract thousands of Maltese families and tourists to Valletta to celebrate the New Year as one large community.'

Firework displays and special effects will also be part of the festivities, creating a magical and colourful atmosphere in the capital.

Valletta has enjoyed a hugely successful year as the European Capital of Culture, with almost 400 events held across Malta and Gozo, featuring more than 2,000 artists and audiences of around 350,000 people.

## Carols by Candlelight 2018



### GOZONNEWS.COM

Christmas just wouldn't be Christmas without Carols by Candlelight – Schola Cantorum Jubilate's highly acclaimed Christmas event in Gozo.

The choir has announced this year's fifteenth edition of the very popular Christmas concert, which will once again take place in the beautiful setting of the 16th century Priory of St Augustine's in Victoria.

The concert will be followed by a five-course meal freshly prepared by Ta' Frenc Chefs. This will be held in the Priory Cloister. The choir said that Paul A. Stellini was appointed as artistic director for this edition, and Victor Agius will hold an exhibition in the

foyer. The choir will be under the direction of Marouska Attard in this presentation of a Christmas Concert with a difference, bringing alive the magic of this festive season.

Carols by Candlelight 2018, is taking place on Friday and Saturday, the 14th and 15th of December. This music event consists of a Christmas Concert followed by a five-course meal at the magnificent 16th century Priory of St. Augustine in Victoria. Tickets are available at €70 each, which includes the dinner, as from tomorrow, Wednesday, the 14th November from Bargate Bookshop Victoria and D'Amato Record Shop, Valletta. The choir said that all proceeds from this event go to the Guzeppa Debono Home – a Church Entity and NGO which caters and provides help for single mothers and fathers, promoting the value of life.



## Bishop of Gozo Mgr Mario Grech on pastoral visit to Peru

Bishop of Gozo Mgr. Mario Grech, last Monday started a pastoral visit in Peru, where he met the missionary, Father Raymond Portelli, from Nadur.

On Thursday, in the parish of St. Martin de Porres he celebrated Mass together with Mons. Miguel Olaortua Laspra, Bishop of Iquitos, where Father Raymond serves as the Priest, and is celebrating fifty years since its establishment.

During his visit Bishop Grech visited four

homes of charity opened and run by Father Raymond, who is also a doctor; two homes are for the rehabilitation of people with drug addiction; one is for the homeless; and one for those suffering from Aids.

The Bishop said that one third of the costs needed to run these homes is raised through donations from Gozo.

In the coming days, the Bishop is also expected to visit members of the Missionary Society of St. Paul, who are in Arequipa and Lima. While in Lima he will also meet with members of the Museum with who are carrying out several projects there.

## RODERICK BOVINGDON WRITES FROM SYDNEY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FOCUS?

Having myself been brought up an ultra-orthodox Catholic – as an altar boy, a member of Malta's Society of Christian Doctrine (M.U.S.E.U.M.), a former Seminarian and a religious choir member of three different groups - fully immersed and committed to these character building affiliations that leave an indelible mark on young minds - the current universal preoccupation with the scandalous behaviour of paedophiliac clergy within the realms of our Church, is a deeply painful problem to confront. What brought this scourge to worldwide scrutiny and utter condemnation is its widespread occurrence within our own religious circles - but not exclusively.

As a young lad growing up in Catholic Malta of the 50's, whatever happened at the village level that would otherwise have raised local eyebrows, was always kept hush hush. Society the world over in that era behaved in similar manner. Children and young pubescents were not to be exposed to matters which 'publicly' went against societal acceptance. And we meekly accepted our superiors' directives while doubts lingered on subconsciously in our boyish minds.

Little did we, decades later, anticipate the current sexual abuse upon minors, that has hit the Catholic establishment with such embarrassing and damaging force. I as one of several millions of nominally Catholic adherents, have given much thought to different aspects of this most worrying cover-up within the very pillars of our collective moral bulwark, the universal Catholic Church.

So if I am a mere single adherent out of several million Catholics throughout the world, profoundly hurt by these dastardly anti-social revelations, why should I speak out and not remain silent like the rest of the masses? As a writer-thinker, a communicator to the masses, I deem it my moral obligation to help eradicate all aberrations deleterious to society's

, provided one is well informed and harbours strong feelings about particular going concerns. Silence only spells approval or at the very least, capitulation to contra forces.

Having expressed my convictions here in no uncertain terms, I am convinced there are extra powerful and influential vested interests throughout society, determined on bringing down the Catholic Church, through their relentless barrages aimed squarely at whatever smacks of

! If this were not the case, then why are all other perverse modes of human behaviour we see all around us, day in day out, tolerated, if indeed not tacitly approved? How rife such hypocrisy!

Whilst I stand four square in full support of the current crackdown by authorities the world over, no matter where these horrid offences happen, I am baffled how different law courts worldwide accept evidence of sexual abuse which allegedly happened several decades ago, often without solid, concrete evidence.

Indeed one questions how the paedophile clerics were never psychologically vetted out of the system during the long seven years' training for the priesthood. Why would any young priestly aspirant with paedophilic tendencies, choose to follow a religious life, knowing they would be bound to celibacy and obedience? Of course once fully fledged clerics they would be acutely aware of the Church's protection from public scrutiny. Also these young men would have no wife and family responsibilities, no taxes to pay, no home to purchase and maintain, no fear of losing their livelihood, with a regular income guaranteed by their faithful congregations.

What a fanciful pretentious life of aimless bliss this must be to the conniving psychopathic cleric, irrespective of the harm and damage he inflicts upon his fraternal good clerics and the universal Church. These psychopathic personalities occur in ALL walks and ranks of life. And neither are they confined exclusively to the male gender! It is time the public outcry unmasks the just as rampant abusive females instead of incessantly demonising the male gender alone. Throughout history we've had Presidents, Monarchs, Prime Ministers, Popes, Army Generals, top scientists, philosophers, leading educators and persons from all society's strata who led their entire lives preying on the vulnerable.

But there is yet another profound aspect which to my knowledge has not been aired publicly despite its serious implications upon Catholic. From and angles every Catholic must be left bewildered. For these considerations have the power to shudder the very foundations of Catholic. How can the believing Catholic laity comprehend the Church's silence on these fundamental scores?

These reflections, as mind boggling as they are, question the entire gamut of Catholic doctrine incorporating the very of our, the and ultimately the continuity of the Church itself! I do not recall ever having read one single public reference by Church authorities to these thoughts surrounding the very essence, the heart of universal Catholicity!

The offending priest who according to traditional Church doctrine, commits a sacrilegious mortal sin with every one of these offences is the same priest who says mass and consecrates the host and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ! The only conclusion one can reach at this travesty is that all those offending clerics, along with the Church hierarchy who protected them, rendering their Catholic faith the greatest fraud in human history.

The Catholic Church has outgrown its original Christian mission with all its pomp, rituals, celebrations, titles, ranks, liturgy, regalia and all the rest. Jesus never had any material wealth, no titles, no fancy clothing to enforce his authority!

As Malta's national poet Dun Karm proclaimed in his epic poem at every step during his intellectual journey, in moments of doubt, he repeatedly retorted! Scolding his very self for having allowed the slightest doubt infiltrate his own priestly Catholic faith, he revealed his human frailty emanating out of the deepest corners of his intellect, his Christian soul.

Where nowadays do we encounter that cleric so devoted to his cause that he places himself last! That he lives primarily for the people he ministers to and for the glory of God alone! With that keen sense of self sacrifice, self denial, self discipline, while placing himself entirely in God's care without a skerrick of

doubt that Providence will look after him; unconditionally! Does this total surrender to faith (*emmen*) no longer resonate within us? *Roma immortale di martiri e di santi!*

To leaders of ALL faiths without exception, this *cri de coeur* expressing the anguish, the angst, out of the depths described in John Donne's poetry, this meagre voice emanating from the grass roots of society, is a reflection of so many hopeful yet disillusioned individuals who, even at this delicate moment in history, still yearn for that blissful *al di la* that seems to be fading into that distant land of hope. *De profundis clamavi* to the powers that be, in all countries, all civilizations, all traditions, all beliefs and non beliefs, to skip all the vacuous rhetoric and get on with truly liberating mankind from the shackles of international hypocritical diplomacy.



## Stephania Farrugia wins player of the month award

Birkirkara captain Stephania Farrugia is the BOV Female player of the Month for October 2018.

The 2017 MFA player of the year maintained her fine form over the summer break to clinch the first individual award of the female football season 2018/2019.

Facing arch-rivals Hibs in the league-opener following their defeat in the BOV Women's Super-Cup, the defender left no space at the back to help her team keep a clean sheet for a 2-0 win.

Leading 1-0 against Mosta, Stephania dived full stretch to connect with a Raina Giusti to hit an eye-catching flying-header past Mosta keeper Zarb. Just five minutes later, she again towered above the opponent's defence to hit another powerful header into the net for the 3-0 lead in a match that ended at 5-0.

Charles Azzopardi, Executive PR & Marketing at Bank of Valletta presented the BOV Female Player of the Month trophy for October 2018 to Stephania Farrugia.

IL-ĦAĠAR  
MUSEUM

IN CONVERSATION WITH  
**JOSEPH CALLEJA**

The world's top lyric tenor talks to former Times of Malta editor Steve Mallia about his life and a career that has taken him across the globe since making his debut at Teatru Astra, Gozo, 21 years ago

Friday 30 November 2018 | 18:30 | Il-Ħaġar Museum

Free Entrance  
Booking is essential: [events@heartofgozo.org.mt](mailto:events@heartofgozo.org.mt)

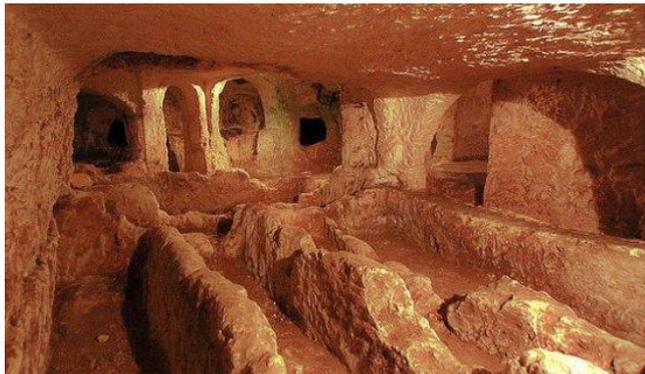
Live Streaming on:  
[facebook.com/JosephCalleja.tenor](https://www.facebook.com/JosephCalleja.tenor)  
[facebook.com/heartofgozo](https://www.facebook.com/heartofgozo)

## In Conversation with Joseph Calleja

World-renowned Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja visits Il-Ħaġar Museum (Victoria's Pjazza San Ġorġ) on Friday 30 November, to talk about his illustrious career at a public dialogue which starts at 18:30. Calleja, who made his operatic debut at Teatru Astra in Gozo in 1997, will be interviewed by former Times of Malta editor Steve Mallia.

The opportunity will also be taken to view the Joseph Vella Music Archive (inaugurated in February this year) and the temporary exhibition – on its last day - *Teatru Astra: Gozo's Trailblazer*, marking the theatre's golden jubilee.

Entrance and participation at this event are free of charge. However, due to space limitations, booking is essential (by emailing [events@heartofgozo.org.mt](mailto:events@heartofgozo.org.mt)). Patrons are gently requested to be seated 20 minutes prior to commencement.



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

## WATCH: Feast which exorcises evil spirits from St Paul's Catacombs to be commemorated

Tvm Tony Dimech

Heritage Malta has continued with its initiatives to bring to life the historical sites it administers.

Another activity in this series will take place on Saturday at the St Paul's Catacombs in Rabat, where the Lemuria will take place – a feast during Roman times which was used to exorcise evil spirits of the dead.

These catacombs which were used as a burial place in Roman times offer the ideal backdrop for performances of the Lemuria which was a ritual to exorcise evil spirits from people's homes.

Janica Buhagiar, a co-ordinator at Heritage Malta said, "according to legend, these lemurs used to be able to enter their homes so they had a type of ritual or exorcism to remove the spirits, by frightening them off so that they will leave the house."

She added that the activity at the catacombs on Saturday will be a performance which will be as authentic as possible to what used to happen in ancient times.

Janica Buhagiar explained, "the event will include actors who will put on an animated performance where people will be introduced to historical characters. Apart from this, those attending will be able to see the rituals take place and we will conclude with the participation of Malta Paranormal where there will be a type of ghost hunt within the catacombs.

She went on to explain that this ritual is documented in a poem by Ovik who was a Roman poet. As the activity will take place in two groups, Heritage Malta said that whoever attends needs to register on its website. Only those who are over 16 years of age can attend.



## Cultural and scenic walks

A balanced variety of cultural and scenic walks in Malta and Gozo are being held this month by the Ramblers Association. Participants are to wear good non-slip shoes and adequate clothing for autumn weather. Surfaces may be slippery when wet, which is likely at this time of year.

A walk being held tomorrow will take in Buskett and its surroundings. The

moderate walk involves steep inclines and rough terrain in the Buskett woods and nearby Wied I-Isqof. It starts at the covered car park in Buskett at 9am and lasts some four hours.

Ramblers will be taken to Gozo for a moderate walk which starts at the Mġarr ferry terminal at 10.30am on Wednesday and will take about four hours from the harbour to Xlendi via Ta' Ċenċ.

On November 25 ramblers will go to Żurrieq valley for a moderate to hard walk over rough terrain that starts off from the parvis of Żurrieq parish church at 9am. It will follow paths along Wied Bassasa and Wied Babu for about four hours.

*In case of inclement weather, walks may be cancelled. For further information call 9949 7080 or 7733 2433 or visit <http://www.ramblersmalta.org> or [www.facebook.com/ramblersmalta](http://www.facebook.com/ramblersmalta).*

## Remembering a young soldier who died in the Great War

All three generations of Boland cousins who met up to mark Michael T. Boland's centenary: (from left) Felicity



Devonshire née Boland, Mark Drew, Sarah Boland, Alicia Drew, Patricia Camilleri née Boland, and Richard Devonshire.

This is the last of the centenary years of World War I (1914-1918). The effects of that tragic conflict are still felt among the nations that were caught up in it. Memories will start to fade, of course, but a promise was made to the soldiers who died in the war that they should never be forgotten. One hopes that pledge will be upheld by future generations.



*Captain Michael T. Boland (1898-1918).*

Of the thousands of names inscribed on the walls of monuments around the world perhaps one of the most shocking and heartbreaking examples is the Thiepval Memorial. Standing on a slight rise in the flat land of northern France it commemorates the lives of those who perished in the Battles of the Somme (1916-1918) but who have no known grave. There are over 72,000 names inscribed on those huge walls. The horror of it is almost too overwhelming to comprehend.

My uncle, 2nd Lt Michael T. Boland of the 2nd Bn. Royal Munster Fusiliers, at least has a grave with a headstone in a small cemetery just outside a tiny village near Cambrai. It was in the last year of the war that a shell hit the dug-out that served as the headquarters of his Company stationed at Épehy. As far as we know, Michael died instantly. He had not yet reached his 20th birthday.

Like each and every one of those thousands of soldiers, Michael had a family, ambitions, a future – all taken away from him on February 26, 1918. His father also served in France, and recalling their last meeting there he wrote:

“At evening we parted as we parted of old when he was a child going to school, and with that happy memory for ever in my heart I watched him until he was lost to view, going soon after to his death, leaving a vacant place which time can never fill.” (The Lost Years by F.W. Boland)

The tragedy of Michael's death lay heavy on his parents and his three siblings. My father, the youngest, was 11 years old in 1918. He always said that his childhood ended on that dreadful day. One can only begin to imagine what the atmosphere was like in that home – as in thousands of others. On February 26, 2018, a small group of Boland cousins, representing three generations, travelled from the UK and Malta, to meet up at Cambrai and visit the grave of their Uncle Michael where he lies at the Villers Faucon cemetery. Together we read poems his father wrote at Michael's death and on the first anniversary, and excerpts from his book. It was cold beyond belief and I passed around some Irish whisky to warm us up and to raise our drooping spirits. We were sure that Michael would have approved.

My grandfather ends his book with these words:

“For my own part, I (...) only hope that in the years to be there may still be those who bear my name and who will sometimes give a kindly thought and a passing prayer to the memory of two of their ancestors who tried to play the part of men in the terrible drama of the Great War.”

As we cousins stood in that freezing corner of northern France we were all glad to be able to tell them both that a hundred years on there were still people who carry their name and who are very proud to give a kindly thought and a passing prayer in their memory.

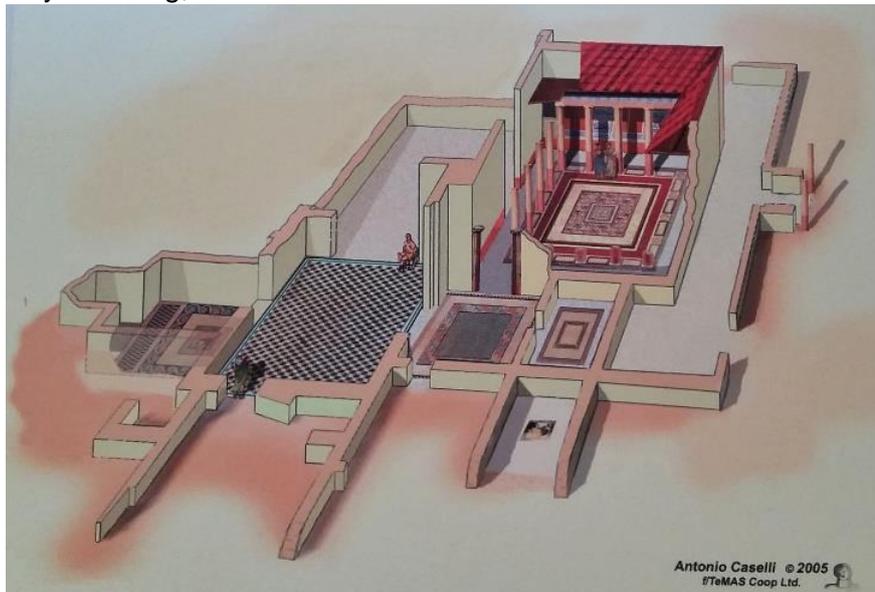
## ROMAN LIFE IN MALTA, EXPLORE THE DOMUS ROMANA WITH FLORA THE EXPLORER



On the day of the Commemoration of the **Malta Republic Day** visit a special site: **the Domus Romana in Rabat** at the doors of **Mdina**, the old Capital City of Malta.

Heritage Malta offered the visit for free and Flora the Explorer couldn't miss this opportunity to discover more about the **Roman life in Malta**, also because the Domus Romana is a site that I wanted to visit for so long but I never had the occasion before.

What I like a lot about visiting the historical sites is that I don't feel alone. Exploring more about the ways of living, the traditions and customs of our ancestors makes me feel part of a big family.



I like to think at the people who lived in the exact place where I am now. What were their problems, how they used to live?

So in a way I don't feel alone, there is the presence of those who spent their time here, before than me.

The **Roman Domus** is the only substantial building discovered within the ancient town of Melite and is indeed **the richest house ever to be found in Malta**.

The remains of this extensive, rich Roman town house and its

mosaic pavements were discovered accidentally in 1881, during the planting of trees for what is now **Howard Garden** just outside Mdina.

The site was investigated further between 1920 and 1924 by Sir Themistocles Zammit, Malta's first Director of Museums. **The neoclassical facade and front garden were completed in 1925.**

The excavations carried out in the fields to the east of the Domus show that the remains of buildings continued on this side of the road leading to the Mtarfa train station.

The **Domus Romana** was built towards the middle of the 1st century BC and was still in use in the 1st and possibly 2nd century AD.

As I discovered inside the museum, the term *domus* stand for a roman town-house and thus differs from a villa such as those in **San Pawl Milqi** in Burmarrad and *ta' Kaccatura* in **Birzebuggia**, which are country estates outside the city walls.

A Roman domus was not just a private residence but served a major part in the public and political relations of the house owner with the outside world. It was a place where most of the business was conducted and if the owner was powerful enough people would flock into the first rooms of the house to receive his blessing in the morning.

**The best features of this Roman Domus are:**

- Its well-made **polychrome mosaic pavement** of the central courtyard, which was once surrounded by a Doric Peristyle. The best tradition of Hellenistic pictorial culture qualify the mosaic composition among the finest and oldest mosaic compositions from the western Mediterranean alongside those of Pompei and Sicily.

- Many artifacts and utensils of the daily Roman life, my favourite ones are the hair pins
- Of a great importance for the history and use of the site is the fact that most of the area covering the Domus and the buildings around it was used as a **burial ground during the Muslim period.**

A number of built graves were uncovered in an area which at the time would have been just outside the recently reduced city of Mdina. The majority of the graves were oriented from East to West and the body was placed lying on their right side with the head turned to the South facing Mecca



Find the names of these Maltese villages – horizontally, vertically, diagonally or backwards. Good Luck.



**NEXT ISSUE WILL BE LATE  
I SHALL BE AWAY**