

Maltese eNewsletter



Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

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MAYOR PETE BUTTIGIEG LOST HIS FATHER JUST FEW DAYS AGO

Could be the First Maltese President of USA

PETE FOR PRESIDENT?

Buttigieg, a boyish municipal servant with a Maltese last name nobody can quite pronounce. (It's Boot-edge-edge, though South Bend residents just call him Mayor Pete).

One of the English teachers told him, 'You're going to have to change that name if you're going to run for president,'



Professor Emeritus Joseph Buttigieg (USA)



A TRIBUTE TO BISHOP MARIO GRECH



EU-CANADA Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)



GOING BACK TO IRAQ

DR MUNJED AL MUDERIS

Birthday with Tasty Treats In Cabinet

Prime Minister celebrated his birthday in the middle of a Cabinet meeting [Tim Diacono](#)

Prime Minister Joseph Muscat took some time off his hectic schedule to celebrate his 45th birthday with his team this afternoon.



Muscat's birthday fell on a Tuesday, the day of the week when Cabinet meetings are held. And his ministers and parliamentary secretaries didn't forget his special day, bringing him cake and other sweets.

Deputy Prime Minister Chris Fearne uploaded the above photo to Instagram, with the caption: "The Cabinet is united behind you!"

Muscat has repeatedly promised to step down as Prime Minister before the next election and has been rumoured as a possible successor to EU Council

President Donald Tusk, whose term is set to expire in November. Many wished the prime minister a happy birthday on social media. Dr Muscat was elected Labour Party leader in 2008, before winning the general elections of 2013 and 2017.

GOING BACK Dr Munjed Al Muderis

We recommend to you to read the book *Going Back* - and discover how a former refugee, now an internationally acclaimed surgeon returned to Iraq to change the lives of injured soldiers and civilians.

Dr Munjed Al Muderis is an Australian Associate Professor in orthopaedic surgery, author and human rights activist. Arriving in Australia as a refugee, his name is now internationally recognised as one of the few surgeons in the world performing osseointegration, a remarkable procedure that transforms lives.



In Munjed Al Muderis's bestselling memoir *Walking Free*, he described his experience as a refugee fleeing Saddam Hussein's Iraq, his terrifying sea journey to Australia and the brutal mandatory detention he faced in the remote north of Western Australia. The book also detailed his early work as a pioneering orthopaedic surgeon at the cutting edge of world medicine.

In his new book, *Going Back*, Munjed shares the extraordinary journey that his life-changing new surgical technique has taken him on. Through osseointegration, he implants titanium rods into the human skeleton and attaches robotic limbs, allowing patients genuine, effective and permanent mobility.

Munjed has performed this operation on hundreds of Australian civilians and wounded British soldiers who have lost limbs in Iraq and Afghanistan. But nothing has been as extraordinary as his return to Iraq after eighteen years at the invitation of the Iraqi government to operate on soldiers, police and civilian amputees wounded in the horrific war against ISIS.

These stories are both heartbreaking and full of hope, and are told from the unique perspective of a refugee returning to the place of his birth as a celebrated international surgeon.



It's called the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

European Council President Donald Tusk, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker at the CETA summit.

European Union and Canada trade deal

used to attract a 54% tariff in Europe

Free trade comes in many forms.

It ranges from single markets to customs unions, to association agreements, to free trade agreements (FTAs) and beyond.

The EU has negotiated 35 trade agreements for its member states, with another 22 pending.

But it says "the most ambitious trade agreement that the EU has ever concluded" is with Canada.

Signed in October 2016, it provisionally came into force last September. The only remaining step is for all the countries to ratify it, which could take several years.

But exporters and importers have been working under its rules for a year, and many now believe the CETA model could be a template for the UK's trading

relationship with the EU after Brexit.

What does CETA do? Some 98% of all tariffs on goods traded between Canada and the EU have become duty free. Most tariffs were removed when the agreement came into force a year ago. All will be removed within seven years.

It means Canadian importers will not have to pay €590m (£529m) in taxes on the goods they receive from the EU, and European importers will see tariffs reduced to zero on some 9,000 Canadian products.

The EU and Canada will open up public contracts at local, regional and federal levels to each other's contractors - that means Canadian companies, say, pitching to build French railways or British builders bidding to construct an Ontario school.

It protects EU "geographical indications", meaning you can only make prosciutto di Parma ham in Italy and camembert cheese in France, and Canada can't import something that calls itself camembert from any other country inside or outside the EU

EU chocolates are tariff-free in Canada

How will trade change? These are the kinds of changes CETA brought in:

- EU tariffs on Canadian goods reduced to zero - frozen mackerel (previously 20%), oats (51.7%), maple syrup (8%), auto parts (4.5%)
- Canadian tariffs on EU goods reduced to zero - chocolate (previously 10%), textiles and clothing (16%), medical equipment (8%), machinery (9.5%)
- Tariff-free quotas (limits) on EU cheese exports to Canada: raised from 18,500 tonnes to 31,972 tonnes
- Tariff-free quotas on Canadian sweet corn exports to the EU: raised from zero to 8,000 tonnes over five years.

Does CETA affect services? It offers more protection for intellectual property rights. **So for instance a European artist** can obtain royalties from a Vancouver cafe or department store that plays music to attract new customers.

The EU and Canada will co-operate on standards, so that a piece of equipment made in an EU country can go through all its safety and quality checks there without needing to have them repeated in Canada - and vice versa.

CETA will also allow professional qualifications to be recognised both in Canada and the EU, making it easier, for example, for architects or accountants to work in both places.

Frank, I cannot thank you and congratulate enough, for the high standard of your publication. I am amazed at the number of different subjects and stories of tremendous interest you manage to publish every edition. Please keep up the good work, and keep sending them to me, I am always looking forward to the next edition.

Vincent Camilleri 25/01/2019

TEMPUS FUGIT

Iż-żmien jgħaddi u jitgerbe
Ma jistenna żgur lil hadd
Inti l-Isqof tagħna kollha
Dhajt bla dubju f'qalb kulhadd!

Għadew sew tlettax-il sena
Mindu sirt Ragħaj tal-Għawdxin
Mill-qalb jiena nawguralek -
Bil-baklu għal bosta snin!

Mhux faċli li inti togħgob
Lil kull min dlonk jersaq lej
Kompli iżda stinka, habrek
Biex tarana lkoll hdejk!

Żomm fuq fommok it-tbissima
Li tagħmlek hekk singolari
Donnu illum illi titbissem
Saret tassew haġa rari!

B'Alla miegħek u b'tas-Sokkors
Żgur li tasal fejn int trid
Iktar w iktar meta għandek
Rieda soda tal-ħadid!

Kav. Joe M Attard Rabat Għawdex 22-01-2019

NB Biex ifakkar din l-okkażjoni l-Isqof Grech mexxa Konċelebrazzjoni fil-Knisja tar-Ragħaj it-Tajjeb Victoria dak inhar stess filgħaxija akkumpanjat mill-Isqof George Bugeja u minn għadd sabih ta' Arċiprieti, Kappillani u saċerdoti.



BISHOP MARIO GRECH – A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Bishop Mario Grech was born and baptised in Qala, Gozo on 20 February 1957. While still young, he and his parents George and Stella moved to the village of Kercem. After completing his studies at Gozo Secondary School, in 1977 he began the study of Philosophy and Theology at the Gozo Seminary in Victoria. He was ordained priest on 26 May 1984 by Bishop Nikol Cauchi.

After his ordination, he was sent to Rome where he received a Doctorate in Canon Law from the University of St Thomas Aquinas. Apart from pastoral work at the Parish of Our lady of the Ascension in Rome, Bishop Grech also worked at the Vicar General's Office and at the Sacra Ruota.

On his return to Gozo he worked in various positions at the Bishop's Curia and was also Judicial Vicar at the Gozitan Ecclesiastical Tribunal. He was actively involved in the beatification process of Madre Margherita Debrincat and Mgr Joseph Depiro.

Bishop Grech also played an important role in the creation of RTK Radio and the Lumen Christi media centre in Gozo. In 2004, he was appointed to the position of parish priest of Kercem. On 26 November 2005, Pope Benedict XVI nominated Mgr Grech as the eighth bishop of the Gozo diocese. He was ordained on 22 January 2006 by bishops Nikol Cauchi and Joseph Mercieca

Gaulitana:**Festival of Music this year focuses on 'Women in Society'**

A Festival of Music – “Gozo’s main classical music festival,” returns between the 8th of March and the 7th of April. The organisers said that this year’s edition promises to be an exciting programme of events focusing on the theme – Women in Society.

Taking a cue from *Manon Lescaut* (the festival’s staged opera), organisers said that the festival will underline the importance of female engagement in the arts and the wider socio-political perspective, by presenting female composers, artists’ and performers’ works and stories to the public.

Gaulitana this year will include an eclectic mix of events with multifarious styles – orchestral, chamber, recitals, vocal, featuring international and local artists and ensembles.

Held in various locations around Gozo – as well as some in Malta – the festival incorporates multiple creative arts, from literature, to acting, cinema and live-painting, whilst presenting multiple genres (jazz, pop, musicals and folk music).

It will also host an exhibition by 30 Chinese female artists and will commemorate the bi-centenary since the birth of Clara Schumann. The festival concludes with the OPERA+ Weekend (5-7 April), a three day cultural bonanza of cultural, the highlight of which is the production of Puccini’s *Manon Lescaut*.

The opera returns to the Maltese stage after an absence of 20 years, starring Miriam Gauci – Gaulitana’s Honorary Patron – in the title role. Alexander Frey returns as Artist-in-Residence, in what the organisers say is a festival offering “an unmissable feast of the arts, including its Espresso Series in the historic Cittadella, the TALK re u series – ushering in key events in the upcoming week – and the MusicAlive series, aiming to present live music to a wider audience.”

“Gaulitana is renowned for having, in the past years, brought the arts, closer to the younger generation through its GAULearn project, particularly through #opera4me – adapted opera performances for the discovery of school children,” the Festival organisers said.

The Festival is being held with the collaboration of several entities including the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Heritage Malta, University of Malta and L-Akkademja ta’ l-Ilsien Malti.

Fondazione Giacomo Puccini Lucca, Concorso Jan Langosz, Festival Belliniano and Associazione FEM are some of the foreign institutions working closely with Gaulitana.

Gaulitana is supported by the Gozo Cultural Support Programme of Arts Council Malta in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo. Booking for *Manon*: www.teatruaurora.com/ or phone 79045779.

Maltese MPs sing the Macarena in rehearsal for l-Istrina



Maltese MPs in parliament sang the Macarena in preparation for the annual L-Istrina charity telethon

Labour MP Julia Farrugia Protelli uploaded a short video on Monday evening on Facebook of MPs singing the Spanish hit song Macarena in preparation for the annual l-Istrina charity telethon, L-Istrina has been holding the event for 20 years, with 2018 bringing in a record-breaking over €7 million in donations during the 12-hour telethon at Hal Safi on 26 December. In the video, MPs from both sides of the House can be seen singing the 1994 hit single Macarena, by Los del Rio, a Spanish Latin pop and dance duo whose smash hit became a worldwide sensation.

Indiana Democrat Pete Buttigieg could be the next President of the United States of America



Buttigieg, a boyish municipal servant with a Maltese last name nobody can quite pronounce. (It's Boot-edge-edge, though South Bend residents just call him Mayor Pete.) Pete Buttigieg, little-known 37-year-old mayor once praised by Obama, joins 2020 presidency rSouth Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg addresses the media on Jan. 5 at the St. Joseph County Democratic headquarters in South Bend after deciding to run for the Democratic National Committee Chair. (Photo: Michael Caterina, South Bend Tribune)

WASHINGTON - Pete Buttigieg was a senior in high school when his team made the 2000 finals of a national student competition to make a monetary policy recommendation to the Federal Reserve.

The St. Joseph's High School students didn't win with their proposal to increase the federal funds rate by 25 basis points. But Buttigieg's performance was so impressive that the Federal Reserve official who created the contest pulled his teacher aside.

"Who was that?" he asked macroeconomics teacher Julie Chismar.

Others have been asking the same thing recently after Buttigieg — now 35 and the mayor of South Bend — joined the crowded race to head the Democratic National Committee.

The next question they ask is: **How do you pronounce his name? It's BOOT-edge-edge.**

"Luckily elections are usually multiple-choice," he says of his difficult last name.

Buttigieg was a late entrant last month in the race to be decided Feb. 25. The early frontrunners were former Labor Secretary Tom Perez — a favorite of the Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton camps — and Minnesota Rep. Keith Ellison, who has the backing of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

But he's gotten a lot of buzz as someone who could come right through the middle of that establishment vs. insurgent divide in the party.

"The DNC is looking for a real change," said former DNC chair Howard Dean, who has not endorsed a candidate. "I was speaking at a Yale Young Democrats meeting (the other) night and that's all they wanted to talk about — Pete."

South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg smiles and waves as he is greeted by family and friends Thursday, September 25, 2014, at Concourse A at South Bend International Airport in South Bend after returning from a seven-month tour serving in the U.S. Navy in Afghanistan. (Photo: Greg Swiercz, South Bend Tribune). What people like most about Buttigieg is he defies stereotypes, said Joe Andrew, who is from Indiana and is one of four former DNC chairs who have endorsed the South Bend mayor. Buttigieg wouldn't just be the youngest, and first openly gay DNC chair. He's also a Rhodes Scholar and an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve who worked for the high-powered consulting firm McKinsey before becoming mayor of a Rust Belt city.

"For those people who want him just to be a Rust Belt mayor so he can talk to people, he's so much more than that," Andrew said. "People who want to paint him as an Ivy Leaguer, they (then) think 'This guy can really talk to people.' People who want to paint him as a gay activist? God no! He's from South Bend, Ind." He comes across, Andrew said, as authentic.

"Here's a very 2017 sentence: I started Thanksgiving morning in a deer blind with my boyfriend's father," Buttigieg said at one of the regional forums preceding the election.

The candidates have been selling similar platforms at the forums. All, for example, are emphasizing the need to build the Democrats' bench, get back to the grassroots, fight voter suppression and pay attention to redistricting.

Buttigieg is arguing that not only does he not represent either side of the Clinton/Sanders division, but he is best positioned to deliver what all are promising.

"If we're all saying we've got to fight in red and purple states, put in somebody from Indiana. If we're saying we've got to pay attention from the top of the ticket on down, put in a mayor — someone whose bread and butter is local office," Buttigieg said at one of the regional forums. "And if we're all saying that the solutions for our party are not going to come from Washington, put in somebody that does not get up in the morning and go to work in Washington every day."

Chismar heard about Buttigieg long before she had him in class.

"I remember one of the English teachers told him, 'You're going to have to change that name if you're going to run for president,'" said Chismar, who has volunteered for all of Buttigieg's campaigns. "If you've heard him speak, he captures your attention."

Although Buttigieg was senior class president, the career he initially envisioned in high school wasn't politics but an airline pilot. **He loved technology and loved to travel, including to his father's native Malta, where Buttigieg is a common last name.** Being a pilot seemed like "good, honest work."

Buttigieg's parents — both professors at the University of Notre Dame — weren't politically connected, but they were politically conscious. Dinner table talk covered world events. Between those conversations and the social consciousness he developed through the Catholic social teachings at St. Joseph's and from being involved with Amnesty International, Buttigieg decided "I had to go out and make myself useful."

But first, he penned the [winning entry](#) for the 2000 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Essay Contest for high school students. His chosen hero? Bernie Sanders.

Buttigieg said he saw Sanders as someone who was passionate about his beliefs without concern for political consequences, yet still able to work with others.

"I thought it was an interesting lesson that often being strong in your convictions makes you actually better able to work with people on the other side," Buttigieg said, "because even if your values are different, they know that you're driven by values, and you have that in common."

Buttigieg, however, endorsed Clinton, not Sanders, in the 2016 presidential race.

"I still think it was really important and a positive thing when he got in," Buttigieg says of Sanders. "I just felt she was the person I most wanted to be president."

At Harvard, Buttigieg studied history and literature while being involved in the Harvard Institute of Politics and working on political campaigns.

When he drove former Rep. Jill Long Thompson to events for her 2002 campaign, Buttigieg impressed her as someone both very bright and gifted, but also down to earth.

"I found that people of all ages just took to him," Long Thompson said. "He just always has stood out."

After studying politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford University where he was a Rhodes Scholar, Buttigieg worked for McKinsey, the management strategy consulting firm. He loved the work and the travel, he said, but ultimately needed more of a sense of purpose.

Maltese Dad of American Presidential Candidate Dies Days After His Son Launches Campaign



"The last thing he said to us was, 'It's been a good trip.' So it has."

Tim Diacono The Maltese father of US presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg has died after succumbing to illness, his son has announced.

Joseph Buttigieg, 68, moved to the United States in the 1970s to read for a PhD and eventually landed a job as a professor of English at a university in Indiana.

His story hit the Maltese news last week after his son Pete Buttigieg confirmed his plan to become

the Democratic Party's representative in next year's election.

"We are in mourning today. With his family at his side, Dad passed away peacefully earlier this afternoon. We miss him already but his love of life, and his moral passion, will stay with us forever," the candidate posted on social media. "As a friend, colleague, thinker, and educator, he touched countless lives, and we hope to find a way to honor his impact later on in the spring."

"The last thing he said to us was, 'It's been a good trip.' So it has. We love you, Dad."

Malta's Education Minister Evarist Bartolo said the island should honour Buttigieg for his contribution to academia.

"He was an intellectual with a big heart, who truly believed and endorsed the values of social justice and democracy and who went against the mantra that money can buy everyone off," Bartolo said. "Our country should honour one of its children."

Pete Buttigieg, 37, was first elected mayor of South Bend, Indiana in 2011, making him the youngest mayor of a US city with at least 100,000 residents. He was re-elected to the post in 2014 with a whopping 80% of the vote. Buttigieg is openly gay, meaning he will become the first openly gay choice of a major political party if he wins the Democratic Party's nomination.

Malta's Prime Minister Joseph Muscat has endorsed his candidature, saying he is proud that Buttigieg is his friend and that he values his Maltese heritage.

Joseph Buttigieg

Joseph A. Buttigieg, William R. Kenan Jr. Professor Emeritus of English and retired director of the Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program at the University of Notre Dame, died Sunday (Jan. 27). He was 71.



"Joe was a superb scholar, an inspirational teacher and a pioneering leader as the inaugural director of the fledgling Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program," said Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., Notre Dame's president. "We join with his many, many family and friends in mourning his passing. We will miss him at Notre Dame. God rest his soul."

Raised on the Mediterranean island of Malta, Buttigieg earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Malta, a second bachelor's degree from Heythrop College in London and his doctorate from the State University of

New York at Binghamton.

Buttigieg joined the Notre Dame faculty in 1980 and, in addition to his service as director of the Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program and as a faculty member in English, he was a fellow in the University's Nanovic Institute for European Studies and Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies and the director of the Stamps Scholars Program at Notre Dame.

Buttigieg is survived by his wife, Anne Montgomery, who was a member of the Notre Dame faculty for 29 years, and his son, Pete, the mayor of South Bend.



II-MALTESE CHAPLAINCY FESTIVITIES GROUP South Australia

jixtiequ javżaw li bħal fis-snin l-imghoddija ser jiċcelebraw in-Nawfragju ta' Missierna San Pawl
fil-Knisja ta' Kristu Re f'Lockleys, nhar il-Ħadd 10 ta' Frar 2019 –
proprju fil-jum li fih il-Festa tiġi ċcelebrata f'Malta.

IL-PROGRAMM TAL-FESTA HUWA DAN:

3.00 p.m. Quddiesa solenni fil-Knisja ta' Kristu Re minn P.Gabriel u li fiha jjeħu sehem il-Kor tal-Maltese Chaplaincy.

Kif tispicċa l-Quddiesa u tingħata l-Barka Sagramentali, l-istatwa tal-Appostlu Missierna San Pawl tiġi meħuda fis-Sala parrokkjali akkumpanjata mill-Maltese Queen of Victories Band.

Fis-Sala tkunu tixtru Pastizzi u Fish and Chips. Xorb bi prezzijiet moderati mill-Bar.

II-MALTESE QUEEN OF VICTORIES BAND tagħti Programm Mużikali fejn tferraħ lil dawk kollha prezenti. Ikun hemm Raffle li biha ngħalqu s-Serata. Ejjew u ġibu magħkom il-ħbieb. Kemm il-Knisja w'anke is-Sala huma mgħammra bl-Airconditioning.



Mgr. George Frendo O.P.

**TWO MALTESE
BISHOPS
CELEBRATE THE
50TH
ANNIVERSARY
OF THEIR PRIESTLY
ORDINATION
THIS YEAR**



Mgr. Paul Cremona O.P.

This year, two Maltese Dominican bishops will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their priestly ordination this year: Mgr. Paul Cremona O.P., Archbishop emeritus of Malta, and Mgr. George Frendo O.P., Archbishop of Tirana-Durres in Albania.

Mgr. Cremona will celebrate his anniversary with a thanksgiving Mass at St Dominic's Church, Rabat, on the 24th March 2019, whereas Mgr. Frendo will celebrate his anniversary at St Paul's Cathedral Church in Tirana, Albania, on the 7th April 2019.

**THE MALTESE QUEEN OF VICTORIES BAND
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
AND
THE MALTESE CHAPLAINCY FESTIVITIES GROUP**

Present

ANDY VENNING

COMEDY HYPNOTIST

Come along and enjoy a night of fun and laughter

When : Saturday 9 th March 2019

Where: 456 Henley Beach Road, Lockleys South Australia 5032

Time: Doors open at 6.30 pm

\$35.00 p/h (includes all the Pizza you can eat)

Drinks at the bar.

Tickets: Lilian 0431772521 Jane: 82687168 Katie: 04293105

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH MALTESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY
Parish 3224 Dundas Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6P 2A3
St. Paul the Apostle Feast Day Celebrations



Friday February 8th. 2019 at 7.00p.m

Concert featuring the Malta Band and a variety of vocalists.

Saturday February 9th. 2019 at 7.00p.m.

Dinner & Dance in honor of St. Paul our Patron Saint. A good DJ, good food and wine on the table. Come and enjoy yourself with so many others on the day of our Parish 's Patron. Tickets are available by communicating with Freda Mifsud (416-762-1891) or the Office.

Sunday February 10th. 2019 at 10.30a.m.

Bilingual Mass in honor of St. Paul. We wish to congratulate all the parishioners on this Wonderful and prestigious Day of our Parish and especially our New Pastor Fr. Mario Micallef MSSP.

We will keep him in our prayers so that God will continue to guide him on this new assignment that he gave him over here in Toronto Canada to be a sign of Hope for so many who need guidance and vision in their life. Happy Feast to you all.

Fr. Manuel

MALTESE AGED CARE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC
Congratulations on receiving the award of 'The Maltese National Order of Merit' - from The members of the Board, Staff and Volunteers of MACASA



The European microstates; Liechtenstein, San Marino, Malta, Monaco, Vatican City and Andorra

The **European microstates** or **European ministates** are a set of very small sovereign states in Europe. The term is typically used to refer to the six smallest states in Europe by area: Andorra, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, San Marino, and Vatican City. Four of these states are monarchies (three principalities—Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Monaco—and one papacy, the Vatican City), with all these states tracing their status back to the first millennium or the early second millennium, except for Liechtenstein, created in the 17th century.

Microstates are small independent states recognized by larger states, unlike micronations, which are only self-declared and not recognized. According to the qualitative definition suggested by Dumieniski (2014), microstates can also be viewed as "modern protected states, i.e. sovereign states that have been able to unilaterally depute certain attributes of sovereignty to larger powers in exchange for benign protection of their political and economic viability against their geographic or demographic constraints." In line with this definition, only Andorra, Liechtenstein, San Marino, and Monaco qualify as "microstates" as only these states are sovereignties functioning in close, but voluntary, association with their respective larger neighbours. Luxembourg, which is much larger than all the European microstates combined, nonetheless shares some of these characteristics.

Some scholars dispute the status of Vatican City as a state, arguing that it does not meet the "traditional criteria of statehood" and that the "special status of the Vatican City is probably best regarded as a means of ensuring that the Pope can freely exercise his spiritual functions, and in this respect is loosely analogous to that of the headquarters of international organisations."

WELCOME TO MARIO FARRUGIA-BORG THE NEW CONSUL-GENERAL OF VICTORIA



The readers of this MalteseJournal would like to welcome and congratulate Mario Farrugia Borg, Malta's new Consul General for Victoria, Australia. Mr Farrugia-Borg is very attuned to the Maltese in Victoria and very keen about ensuring that the service he provides is community focused. Mario has settled in well in the western suburbs of Melbourne with his partner Joanne and children. The Consul General and his team are available at the General Consulate offices at Suite 613, level 6, 343 Little Collins Street Melbourne.

Malta To Give UK Citizens Special Residence Status And Council Voting Rights After Brexit



Prime Minister announces Malta's contingency plans in the event of a No-Deal Brexit

Tim Diacono

Malta will offer special residence status to British people after the United Kingdom exits the EU, even in the case of a 'No Deal' scenario, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat announced today.

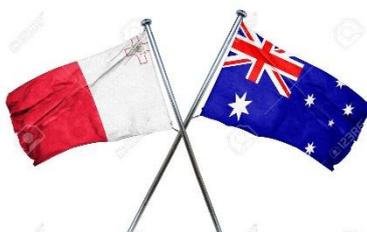
Addressing a press conference about Malta's contingency plans for a 'No Deal Brexit', Muscat confirmed that British citizens who are residents of Malta as of 'Brexit Day' on 29th March will be issued a special residence document valid for ten years completely free of charge.

"Our point of departure is that we didn't want to place any burdens on British citizens living in Malta or reduce the rights they currently enjoy," Muscat said. "Their residence documents will have an unprecedented length of validity, which will send a strong political signal that we want British citizens to have their minds at ease."

British citizens who move to Malta after the end of March will also be issued a 10-year residence document but will be subject to different rules, similar to those that apply for third-country nationals. "However, our policy guideline is that we want to remain open and hospitable to British citizens," he said.

As a sign of friendship, Malta will continue allowing British residents to vote in local council elections, as per a proviso which existed prior to Malta's EU accession in 2004.

British citizens will also get to benefit from special status at the Malta International Airport, with Muscat confirming Malta is in discussions with the European Commission about setting up a preferential track for British citizens. He added that this border check queue could also include non-EU citizens from EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway, Switzerland



INVITATION TO THE MALTESE COMMUNITY FAMILY and FRIENDS REUNION PICNIC SOUTH AUSTRALIA

This is an open invitation to the Maltese Community of all ages their families and friends.

DATE: March 31, 2019 **TIME:** 11.00am onwards

PLACE: Bonython Park, Port Road (Opposite Coca Cola)
(Area 11, north of the lake) Look for the Maltese Flags!!

BYO: Food, Drinks, Chairs and any photos you may want to share

This is an opportunity to bring your families and friends together and catch up with those you don't see on a regular basis.

For further information, you can contact:

Lawrie Caruana on 0407 886 899 or email lacaruana@bigpond.com Catherine Saliba on 0438 825 174 or email catherine.saliba@yahoo.com

PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD!!!!

In the event of inclement weather please contact the organisers for any updates.

MALTESE HOME GUARD
PARADE AT ST. JULIANS 1940



Malta Home Gurad Volunteers - WW2 Young and Old



The Żebbuġ Home Guard Group with company commander Anthony Borg, winners of marksmanship competition, from Malta: Blitzed but Not Beaten by Philip Vella, 1998

The Malta Home Guard retained the role to shoot at any parachutists attempting to invade the island

In 1939, the Malta Auxiliary Corps was raised by means of the Malta Territorial Force.

The Malta Home Guard retained the role to shoot at any parachutists attempting to invade the island. The duties of these men were mainly as cooks, mechanics, orderlies and drivers, the latter even volunteered using their own cars and trucks.

A number of businessmen who were not eligible for military service started contacting the British military authorities and offered to serve as required in the defence of the islands and for King and country.



Malta Home Guard Cap Badges

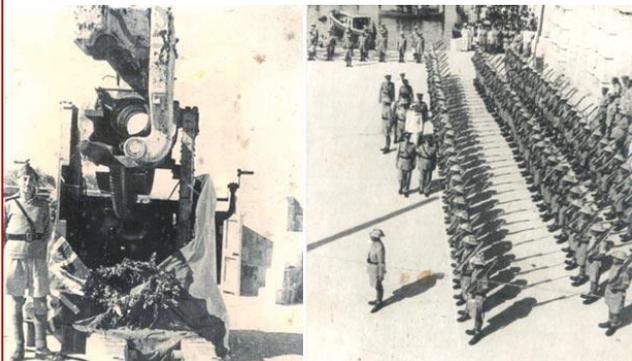
Remembering the Royal Malta Artillery's forgotten thousands

by Major Maurice Agius



Photo Left - 1st Coast Regiment, RMA, June 1943. Photos courtesy of Heritage Malta - National War Museum

Photo Right- 11th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, RMA, 1943. Photos courtesy of Heritage Malta – National War Museum



Lieutenant G. Amato-Gauci standing next to a 4.5-inch gun at St Peter's Heavy Anti-Aircraft position that had been badly damaged by a direct hit. Right: His Majesty King George VI (centre) inspecting an RMA guard of honour in June 1943.

Who were these Maltese gunners who were so highly praised during the Battle of Malta? Most of them, mainly in their 20s, had joined the Royal Malta Artillery (RMA) in 1938-1939 to get a regular income. They came from all over Malta and Gozo and some of them could not even sign their name on pay day.

One wonders how much Malta appreciates the importance of the contribution given by these brave young men to the outcome of the Battle for Malta in World War II

After their recruit training, they were all posted to the RMA anti-aircraft (AA) units being formed at the time, except for some who were posted to 1st Coast Regiment to replace those promoted to non-commissioned officers (NCOs) for the new AA units.

The Governor – General Sir Charles Bonham Carter – after inspecting the recruits during their training, wrote in his personal diary that they were all of an exceptional good standard and they proved him right even under fire. In mid-1941 and later, they were joined by conscripts, who integrated very quickly, so that, within a short time, it was difficult to say who was the volunteer and who was a conscript.

I had the honour of serving with about 130 of them, in 7th Heavy Anti-Aircraft (HAA) Battery, in both of its troops, for nearly three years of the battle. I could not have wished for a better lot. Naturally, living so closely for such a long time created a tight bond between us. Any disciplinary action was of a corrective nature; they formed a compact, determined team.

They had found no problem in learning the orders shouted in English: "Plaaane"; "Take post"; "On target – bearing O five O"; "First 17 thousand"; "Set 17 thousand"; "In Range"; "Fire"; "Stopp – Fresh Target bearing 360", and so on. Many of these orders were shouted at the top of one's voice, especially during action, to ensure that everyone heard them and to overcome the very loud bangs when the four guns were being fired, often within a fraction of a second of each other.

I managed to get a tear in my ear drum during a practice shoot, when I was acting as a gun layer; 30 cartridges exploded six inches away from my ear.

Day after day, month after month, year after year, these men put on their steel helmet and stood at their post inside a gun emplacement with a five-foot concrete wall all around and scores of live rounds of ammunition stacked for easy reach; they never faltered or grumbled even when they fired the guns on a

nearly empty stomach. Their anxiety was for their families, especially when they could see their own town or village being bombed.

Very rarely, they were rewarded after manning their guns all day and all night by a shout coming from the darkness at about 3am: "Ejjew għat-te", which meant that the cook had managed to scrape enough tea leaves to brew some weak tea with reconstituted milk powder but no sugar. It was hot and wet and it went down like nectar.

When things got even worse than usual and I could see that their smile on their faces was fading, I used to make it a point of spending more time with them during lulls in firing. We talked a little about the solar system, science, geography, history, all in very basic terms from memory as we had no books. Everything was new to them and they enjoyed the distraction.

The job we were doing always crept in at some stage. We were fighting for a just cause against the evil of the Nazis and Fascists.

They wanted to conquer the world and make people work for them like slaves or be shot. Once the war was won, Malta would be very proud of us for having taken such an important part in the defence of our country and families, at a time when their need was so urgent. Our young men came through the ordeal with flying colours – a great credit to the RMA and to Malta.

And I even venture to suggest what the monument should look like. Two RMA gunners wearing steel helmet, denim suit and boots, in line to the left rear of that monstrosity of the counterbalance of a 3.7-inch AA static gun, with two or three spent cartridges on the ground; the gun itself cocked up to about 50 degrees, showing only the rear part – only very little of the barrel. The inscription could read:

"The Battle for Malta 1940-1943 – Royal Malta Artillery gunners defending their country."

We remember our dead each year. We should also be grateful to those who defended our country and survived

Stephanie Fsadni

Exalted by sacred art

Luqa church embellishment project continues



Photos:



Emmanuel Cachia

The parish church of Luqa, which was rebuilt after being completely destroyed in World War II, is undergoing a long and laborious embellishment project, with the latest phase completed and inaugurated last Saturday.

The choir (kor in Maltese) has been decorated with sacred art by Paul Camilleri Cauchi, sculpture by Joseph Micallef and gilding by John Pace.

Chev. Camilleri Cauchi's work already adorns various parts of the church, including the cupola, which was completed in 2010. Mr Pace had also been entrusted with the gilding for that part of the project. The artist's work on the choir can be considered to be a continuation of the titular painting by Mattia Preti, which features the martyrdom of St Andrew.

The main scene depicts the apotheosis of the patron saint of Luqa, that is, his ascent to the glory of heaven where he is greeted by Mary, Mother of God, various angels and saints.



The latter include archbishops, followers of the apostles and doctors of the Church who spread the Word of God after the apostles. Others include St Helen, who like St Andrew embraced the True Cross, and martyrs St George, St Sebastian, St Catherine of Alexandria, St Lawrence and St Lucy.

St Peter and St Paul, considered to be the pillars of the Christian Church, also feature prominently. Another scene shows a resurrected Christ welcoming St Andrew with open arms.

Since St Andrew is the patron saint of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, he is portrayed surrounded by a number of saints from the west and east, including St Gregory the Great, St Jerome, St Augustine, St Anastasius of Persia and St Francis of Assisi.

Paul Camilleri Cauchi putting the finishing touches on the figure of St Andrew. Photo: Lorella Castillo

Importance was attached to the colours and numbers. These have

symbolic meanings, for example, yellow is the colour of light and purity, while green represents the victory of life over death.

The seven angels with tongues of fire above them represent the perfect number and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit which St Andrew received during Pentecost: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude/courage, knowledge, piety/reverence and fear of the Lord.

The three theological virtues – faith, hope and charity – and the cardinal virtue of

justice are also represented.

The choir project cost €90,000, with most funds coming from the congregation and a sponsorship by the APS Bank.

Parish priest Canon Michael Zammit estimates that the church would need between €400,000 and €500,000 more to complete the embellishment project, which was initiated by the late parish priest Fr Joe Camilleri, who died tragically in 2003 after a fall at the Luqa parish centre.

This would mainly consist of the decoration of the nave.



WORLD WAR TWO

Rationing of food and clothing

Rationing regulations for food and clothing were gazetted on 14 May 1942. Rationing was introduced to manage shortages and control civilian consumption. It aimed to curb inflation, reduce total consumer spending, and limit impending shortages of essential goods. The broad reasoning behind the introduction of rationing was to ensure the equitable distribution of food and clothing. It was also hoped that a cut on consumer spending would lead to an increase in savings, which in turn could be invested in war loans.

Australians were never as short of food nor rationed as heavily as civilians in the United Kingdom. Rationing was enforced by the use of coupons and was limited to clothing, tea, sugar, butter, and meat. From time to time, eggs and milk were also rationed under a system of priority for vulnerable groups during periods of shortage.

Rationing was administered by the Rationing Commission. The basis for policing food rationing was through the surrender of coupons before rationed goods could be supplied. This had to occur between traders as well as consumers. Coupons were passed back from consumers to retailers, from retailers

to wholesalers, and in many cases from wholesalers to producers, who were requested to return them to the commission.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Breaches of rationing regulations were punishable under the general provisions of National Security Regulations by fines of up to £100 or up to six-months imprisonment. Responding to the complaint that these penalties were inadequate, the government passed the Black Marketing Act at the end of 1942. This Act was for more serious cases and could carry a minimum penalty of £1,000.

A window display in a city store showing the price tag and number of coupons required for the purchase of a child's overcoat and caps. Date of gazettal for coupon rationing

Item	Date gazetted	Date abolished	Quantity per adult
Clothing	12 June 1942	24 June 1948	112 coupons per year
Tea	3 July 1942	July 1950	1/2 lb per 5 weeks
Sugar	29 August 1942	3 July 1947	2 lb per fortnight
Butter	7 June 1943	June 1950	1 lb per fortnight
Meat	14 January 1944	24 June 1948	2 1/4 lbs per week

This table reflects initial quantities. Many items were adjusted and rations reduced at a later date.

Food and agriculture provision in Malta during WWII

Anthony Zarb Dimech looks into Malta's

During the Second World War Malta was not self-sufficient in food production and thus depended to a very large extent on supplies of food reaching the island through convoys.

Malta required the sort of planning and sophistication of organisation to continually feed a population of about 260,000 civilians. The task was of continuous flexibility in administrative organisation to keep up the efficiency and effectiveness of providing not only enough food stocks but also in other matters as shelter excavation, schooling and health care.

The Maltese agricultural production could only feed one-third of the population. Several measures were implemented to ensure food was produced, supplies and distributed fairly among the inhabitants of the Maltese islands. Several organisations took part and new ones set up. The most important ones include the Rationing Office, the Agriculture Department, Food Distribution Office and the Communal Feeding Office or 'Victory' Kitchens.

The Rationing Office

The Rationing Office ensured that essential commodities were equitably and fairly distributed. The work of this office was implemented through District

Commissioners and Regional Protection Officers. The Maltese Islands were divided into North, West, South East Regions, and into Valletta, Sliema, Marsa, Cottonera Districts and Gozo.

Family Ration Book

Every family had its own Family Ration Book issued by the Food Distribution Office. This book was under the name of the head of the family. This Office also issued permits to grocers to provide the customer with such essential commodities as:

**Sugar Coffee Matches Laundry Soap Lard and/or Margarine Edible Oil Corned Beef
Tomato Paste Kerosene**

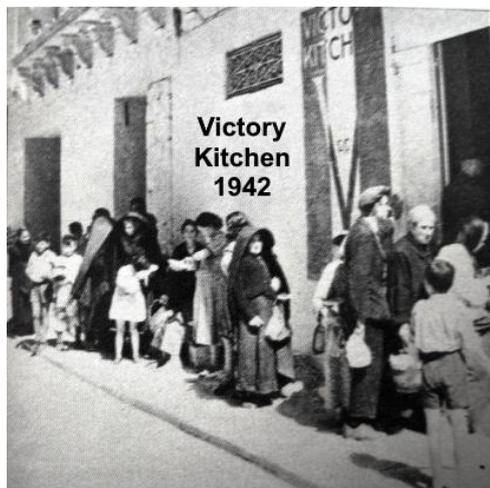
The above list was by no means exhaustive. It was imperative that changes in family size were to be reported to the Protection Officer within 48 hours against a penalty of not less than £5 or not more than £10. Also changes in locality from one District to another were to be notified of the destination area. Consumers who did not comply with these regulations risked being deprived of their rations. Size of family was important in determining the amount of ration allotted per household. The amount of entitlement would vary from time to time according to the availability of supplies during the period in question. For instance, at the height of the Blitz between Jan/Jun and Jul/Dec 1942, the amount allotted per half month for the two respective periods reveal that supplies were dwindling and the amount allotted to families was reduced heavily.

Receipts and tickets for the provision of supplies for the farming industry (such as seeds, Barley wheat and barley corn) were issued in different colours and illustrated with the type of animal to be fed for ease of identification by illiterate people

The Food Distribution Office also kept records of weekly Returns showing the position of coupons in their respective Districts in respect of essential commodities.

The Rationing (Registration) Regulations, 1942 were implemented on 13th November 1942 and as part of the rationing organisation (on 29th October 1942).

THE Victory Kitchens in Malta



As the siege of Malta intensified supplies became precariously low and in January 1942 the Government decided that it made sense to cook the food for the community in one go to eliminate wastage and it decided to tackle the situation by setting up community kitchens, known as Victory Kitchens, throughout the island. The first of these community kitchens opened in Lija in January 1942 and by June 1942 there were 42 Victory Kitchens. In January 1943 more than 175,536 people were receiving a cooked meal from these kitchens, where the food would be collected to be eaten at home. Penalties for being caught stealing food at this time were very harsh and stealing a couple of slices of bread could land you in prison for four months!

Those who registered with Victory Kitchens were required to surrender part of their family ration of fats, preserved meat and tinned fish rations in return for a cooked meal that consisted partly of the surrender portion and partly of un-rationed commodities. Authentic meals served at the Victory Kitchens included hot pot meals, e.g. pork and goat stews. Gozo however had sufficient food to sustain itself and the Maltese Government deployed a member of the armed forces to confiscate food from Gozitan families in order to relieve the drastic food shortage in Malta.

As besieged Malta edged towards starvation and was on the brink of surrender the Operation Pedestal convoy – a total of 59 warships and 14 merchant ships made up the convoy, including the Texaco oil tanker, Ohio – set out with 85,000 tons of supplies, 53,000 tons of which ended up at the bottom of the Mediterranean, but the remaining 32,000 tons of supplies changed the fate of Malta. The cargo included amongst other items: aviation fuel, petrol and kerosene, medical supplies, corned beef, mutton, tinned fish, dehydrated vegetables, tins of Cheddar cheese, tins of butter, dehydrated potatoes, powdered milk, hard tack biscuits, wheat flour, maize, cotton bales, whisky, cigarettes and tobacco, guns, shells, aircraft consignments and cars.

If you are in Valletta, look out for the only remaining Victory Kitchen sign in Malta that was discovered around ten years ago during renovation works to the façade of shop, that was previously a retail clothing outlet known as Krishna. The sign has been fully restored to its original red, white and dark blue colours.



Recording the story of Malta's lost music

For the record ... Musicologist and researcher Andrew Alamango wants to keep early-20th-century Maltese music accessible to modern fans. Photo: Darrin Zammit Lupi
Music by Maltese singer Emanuel Cilia and guitarist Carmnu Cardona has become part of an audio project to make the island's first recorded tracks more accessible.



The Hungarian Orchestra played daily at Café Premier, Valletta, in the late 1920s, with renowned baritone Watty Cachia

This was the decade of the young Bing Crosby, Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington and Tommy Dorsey. In the 1930s the pop charts were not born and there was no television.

But record-players were becoming a part of our lives... and saw the birth of the long-playing record at 33 rpm.

Next would come radio.

The new, young music was with us every day ... but it was not all about the young kid on the block Frank Sinatra and the others from across the water. It was about Malta's singers, too.

Sadly, many of their recordings are lost. But the drive to keep the first Maltese records from the 1930s accessible to the public continues with the release of an affordable double CD yesterday, which retains the "tangible" feel of the nation that music is losing.

Malta's Lost Voices project, initiated two years ago by musicologist and researcher Andrew Alamango, did not stop with the collection, cataloguing, digitising, sound restoration and collation in a high-quality CD-book form, which is now out of print and lacks the funds to be reproduced.

Through the release of more CDs in the series, Mr Alamango wants to guarantee that the Maltese music recorded in 1931 and 1932 in Tunis and Milan – which is now available in a database at the National Archives in Rabat – would not die out.

"It has a huge educational importance in terms of our identity, history, language and grammar, as well as politics," he said.

Now he hopes his pilot project in sound preservation, supported by the National Archives and the Education Ministry, will lead to the setting up of a national sound archive, which the country lacks.

It could be an example of how to go about it and the first step towards it, he maintains.

The whole collection includes 160 records and is the earliest documented sound of the country, which Mr Alamango describes as an "audio photograph or sonic sculpture of the time".

Sourced from families who inherited them, flea markets, antique shops and collectors worldwide, they have all been digitised but only 30 have been published so far.

One CD includes għana, guitar and instrumental music, as well as parlanti (comic storytelling, accompanied by small orchestras), while the other focuses on the tangos and waltzes of the dance culture in cafés and restaurants during the interwar period.

"The music was genuine, authentic and gutsy. It was not done for recording purposes," Mr Alamango said.

The idea is to have a series of “vintage, regional, collector’s items, which tell the whole story”, in this case by reproducing it in the style of an old newspaper of the time, and reproducing the book in CD format.

“It is about creative and tang-ible packaging. It is not about the music alone but about the stories and experiences which complement it, and vice-versa.”

The ongoing release of vintage music from Malta by Filfla Records, Mr Alamango’s local music label, will also include a vinyl in September.

“We are missing the tangibility and high-quality sound of the vinyl now that we are accustomed to listening to music on laptops and iPhones, moving from the physical needle on the gramophone record, savouring the sound and reading the sleeve notes to today’s digital disposable music,” Mr Alamango said of the changing technology and experience of music for modern listeners.

“I recall listening to an LP for three weeks at a stretch, moving the needle back and forth.

“Now, we are exposed to more and can have a playlist of five gigabytes of music, which we do not even listen to and do not appreciate owning.”



In his quest to keep the first music of the past alive, a documentary is in the pipeline and Mr Alamango also intends to organise public listening sessions for the records.

During his research, stories of agents and musicians have been coming to light and Mr Alamango has also stumbled upon Malta’s first recording machine.

It was bought by the owner of the Carabott music store in Merchants Street, Valletta, from the Marquis Scicluna in the 1920s and is now in the hands of the National Archives.

The “gem” is a steel tower that musicians could step into, with side shutters they could draw around them to avoid external noise, throw in a coin and record their sounds into a microphone for a limited time.

These were engraved on a little aluminium disc at 78 revolutions per minute, which was then spat out and could be listened to through headphones.

The plan is to raise funds to restore the machine, which is on display at Damato Records in Valletta, where the double CD was launched yesterday

This article was published in the Times of Malta Saturday, June 23, 20120 by Fiona Galea Debono

Pope in Panama to visit young offenders in prison

Pope Francis attends the opening ceremony for World Youth Day at the Coastal Beltway in Panama City, Panama January 24, 2019. *Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters*



PANAMA CITY- Pope Francis will briefly break away from the clamor of the global Catholic youth gathering in Panama on Friday to visit a group of marginalized young people outside the capital.

A 30-minute helicopter ride will take him to the industrial hub of Pacora, where he will visit young offenders at a youth detention center and hear their confessions, including one serving time for murder.

The Las Garzas detention center houses 192 young offenders and it was here that some 30 of them made the wooden confession boxes being used at the Garden of Forgiveness in Panama as part of the World Youth Day celebrations, which brought the pope here.

"I will tell him that I painted it with a lot of tenderness and especially for him. I'm proud that he is coming to this place to spread his message," one young inmate at the center, some 40 kilometers (25 miles) outside Panama City, told AFP in November.

Later in the afternoon, the pope will accompany young people at a Stations of the Cross ceremony in a Panama park overlooking the Pacific.

South Australia heatwave smashes record temperatures 24 January 2019

More than 13 towns across South Australia have smashed their own heat records



Sunbathers are seen on Bondi Beach as temperatures soar in Sydney.

Temperatures in southern Australian neared 48 degrees on Thursday, shattering previous records as sizzling citizens received free beer to help weather heatwave of historic proportions.

The Bureau of Meteorology reported temperatures of 47.9 Celsius (118 Fahrenheit) north of

Adelaide, while inside the city temperatures reached 46.2 Celsius, a fraction above a record that had stood since 1939.

Adelaide residents are used to sweltering days during the southern hemisphere summer, but even they could find very little relief from the oppressive temperatures.

More than 13 towns across South Australia have smashed their own heat records, with some of the state forecast to see temperatures of 50 degrees by the end of the day.

While thousands flocked to the beach to cool off in the surf, hundreds have taken to shopping centres to stay out of the heat. At the Red Lion Hotel, publicans gave a free beer to each of their patrons while the temperature remained above 45 degrees. Around one hundred people lined up for their free drink for over one hour.

But the temperatures are also testing municipal services, with SunCity buses forced to cut their services, leaving commuters searching for trams or trains to get home.

Meanwhile, emergency services are on the alert as more than 13 districts are under threat of possible bushfires. Power consumption is expected to peak in the afternoon, risking drops in voltage known as brownouts, but premier Steven Marshall insisted the grid could cope with the heat wave conditions.

Ghawdex #inhobbok Concert: Special Valentine's concert in Gozo



As part of the programme of events being organised around the theme of love, for Valentine's in Gozo, there will be concert in Independence Square, Victoria – Ghawdex #inhobbok Concert

The date for this special concert is Saturday, the 16th of February, and the evening promises to be a spectacular night with at difference. The headline act is Ivan Grech & Band – former

Winter Moods frontman – the supporting artists are Pocci, Micimago and BennyGee. The concert has been organised by the Ministry for Gozo, in collaboration with Fevasi. It gets underway from 9pm and entrance is free of charge.

SISTER ACT 3? WATCH THESE NUNS ROCK OUT WITH INCREDIBLE QUEEN WE WILL ROCK YOU COVER



These group of nuns have made themselves real contenders for becoming the cast of a new Sister Act film.

A video has appeared online of a group of nuns performing their own version of Queen's hit song We Will Rock You.

Singing alongside the actual track, the group of ladies recreate the famous Roger Taylor drum beat by banging their hands on their tables in unison.

If that wasn't perfect enough, one of the nuns leading the pack then broke into an air guitar solo that Brian May would be proud of.

The cheerful clip has been viewed 47,000 times and shared over 1,300 times since it was shared by the Best Music Memories Back In Time Facebook account.

Those who viewed the video were equally as delighted as the women captured in the video. One person commented: 'None of the nuns in my school were this cool..' One nun even played air guitar. Another supporter of the nuns said: 'I'm becoming a nun. Looks like they have way more fun than me.' What a thing to see. Pic: Facebook. A third person added: 'So great seeing them having fun.'

Final Children's Protection Act unveiled; aims to put children's interests first

Albert Galea

The final Children's Protection Act which aims to put children's interests first was unveiled on Friday in a joint press conference held in Parliament by Minister for Family, Children's Rights and

Social Solidarity Michael Falzon and PN MP and spokesperson for Family Welfare, Social Solidarity, Pensions & Rights of Children, Babies and the Unborn Claudio Grech.

Both Grech and Falzon spoke of the need for an Act which will give priority to the rights and interests of children, and both agreed that this was a matter where politics should not be involved – it is only at this legislative stage that politicians should involve themselves, and anything following that should be left in the hands of the more than capable professionals that exist in this



field, they said. Falzon in fact said that in inviting the Opposition to the press conference, the government wanted to send the message that the matter of children's rights should never be politicised.

The Act will introduce various reforms to add protection to children, especially those who find themselves in vulnerable situations which would not necessarily have been their fault. Grech said that the opposition wanted to ensure that no child was "robbed" of their childhood.

The reforms include the appointment of special guardian for especially vulnerable children, making every decision taken appealable, making it mandatory for professionals working with children to report cases of abuse, that if someone makes a bona fide report which does not turn out to be true they will not be subject to legal action themselves, and the granting of the right for a foster-carer to go abroad with a minor after notifying the agency.

There will also be reforms in how the Director for the Protection of Minors will be appointed – with this being done through a public call – and in the formation of several boards relating to this subject.

Falzon concluded that this was a very emotional sector as it was dealing with the lives of children and, in turn, the lives of Malta's future society.

Our heroes: Thai cave divers claim historic joint Australian of the Year award



Diving doctors, a pediatrician working to eliminate child abuse, a 22-year-old Indigenous superstar and grieving parents fighting for a kinder world - here are your 2019 Australians of the Year.

It was the news story that captured global headlines, and now, our country's Thai cave heroes have been named the

2019 Australians of the year - the first time the award has ever been given jointly to two people.

Meanwhile, a pediatrician fighting to eliminate child abuse, an Indigenous performer and two parents using the loss of their daughter to stop bullying have been honoured in the local heroes, senior and young person categories. Dr Craig Challen, from Western Australia, and Dr Richard Harris, from South Australia, were selected as joint Australian of the Year for their heroic efforts to free 12 boys and their football coach after they became trapped in a flooded cave in Chiang Rai, Thailand, in July 2018.

Dr Harris said he feels uncomfortable with being chosen as the co-winner.

"We are both quite uneasy about this recognition. We were both one part of a team," he said.

Dr Challen got teary-eyed when a video of congratulations from the Thai cave boys was played at the award ceremony.

"Well, you know, a lot has been said about this little adventure that we had, but I think the bottom line for me is that there are 13 families that have still got their sons, that wouldn't have if we hadn't been there as part of that group, so that's what floats my boat!"

Working as part of the international rescue team, which included a total of 20 Australians, the long-time friends were crucial in the eventual rescue of the boys after more than two weeks underground.

As a medical doctor with 30 years experience as a diver, Dr Harris was tasked with swimming 4km through the narrow cave to reach the boys, assessing their health and administering anaesthetic so they were able to be evacuated.

CELEBRITIES WITH MALTESE ANCESTRY



Malta may be just a speck on the world map, but some of our compatriots have set the scene for many superstars to be born and entertain the world.

1. **Kerry Ingram** – Rising to fame as Princess Shireen in *Game of Thrones* – the little girl who was burnt at the stake – Kerry's still at the beginning of her career. What many may not know is that Kerry's grandfather lives in Imqabba and is Maltese. If that's not random, I don't know what is...
2. **Edwidge Fenech** – I guess her surname gives the ancestry away here. Born to a Maltese father and a Sicilian mother in France, Edwidge is one of those *CineCitta* actresses with more talent than one person should have. Among her many accomplishments, the two that stand out the most are when she was asked by Quentin Tarantino to star in *Hostel: Part II* and producing *A Merchant of Venice*, which starred Al Pacino.
3. **Joseph Calleia** – Before the tenor, there was the actor. And while today he's all but forgotten by the Maltese, Joseph Calleia's fame would be similar to Leonardo Di Caprio's today. Born in Malta, the actor went to Hollywood and played various roles, and worked alongside Rita Hayworth in *Gilda*, Ingrid Bergman in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Lucille Balls in *Lured* and with Orson Welles in *Touch of Evil*. He was one of the Golden Age of Hollywood's most popular and ubiquitous actors.
4. **Bryan Adams** – This Canadian legend's grandmother was Maltese, and in case the feud between Valletta and Floriana needed any kindling, she was from Floriana, and lived in Valletta. In fact, his ancestry had been officially revealed to us a few years back when Adams held a concert in Pembroke.
5. **Britney Spears** – When our descendants will read about our cultural history some 200 or 300 years from now, there will definitely be a chapter on how 2007 was an uber eventful year for celebrities. The one who had made the most headlines was Britney Spears for shaving her hair off and attacking a car with an umbrella. It seems like Britney's great grandparents were also the talk of the town back in the 1920s when they were living in sin. More importantly to our cause however, was Britney's great great grandfather, Edward Richard Portelli, who was born in Malta in 1873.

So yes, they may not have a Maltese passport and, yes, not everyone would directly associate them with this little island. But they still have Maltese blood running through their veins.

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



You may also read this Journal at the:
 Malta Migration Museum, Valletta; Gozo National Library
 Maltese-Canadian Archives - Toronto
 website: ozmalta.com

