

Maltese eNewsletter



Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR - maltesejournal@gamil.com



EATING SOME PASTIZZI

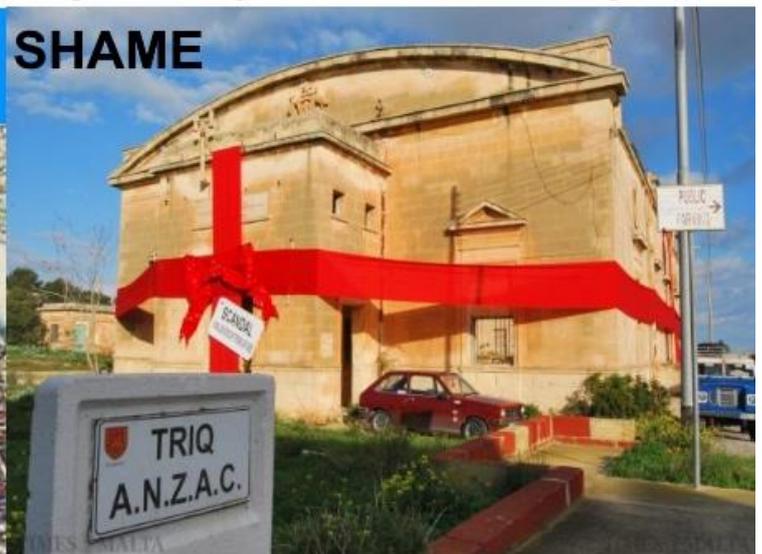
Flaky, golden pastry enclosing traditional fillings of pea or ricotta are a must-eat when in Malta. Like most things these days, modern touches have been made to the traditional pastizzi, meaning you can just about find any type of filling.

The size of the pastizzi also differs depending on where you are and who is making them.

NAPOLEONE AND FRENCH INVASION OF MALTA



SHAME



SAVE AUSTRALIA HALL IN MALTA FROM DESTRUCTION

BELLISSIMA MALTA - Feeling blue

For 7,000 years, Malta's landscape and culture have been shaped by the sea – so little wonder it's got a Blue Hole, a Blue Lagoon and even Blue Label beer. We trace its dominant colour and meet some of the locals



*Text by Trevor Baker
Photos/River Thompson*

In Malta, the colour blue has taken on a spiritual significance. The many statues of the Virgin Mary here are invariably painted blue and white. The wooden, high-prowed dghajsa water taxis that, for 200 years, have carried people across the Great Harbour to capital city Valletta, are also often painted blue and yellow, mimicking the colours of the limestone rock that's still the island's favourite building material. When you get close to that limestone, whether it's the natural arch of the Azure Window or the neolithic temples of Hagar Qim and

Mnajdra, one thing you notice is how soft it is. The early settlers were able to carve it into huge blocks, even though they had yet to invent bronze, let alone iron.

Malta was settled around 7,000 years ago when the first people to arrive came on makeshift canoes from nearby Sicily and Tunisia. The Phoenicians, Romans and Arabs later came here because of the island's importance as a stepping stone in the Mediterranean between Africa and Europe. By the time of the Knights of St John, the Christian military order who had their base here from 1530 to 1798, the archipelago was already known for its spectacularly blue waters.

It's not clear, though, when the Maltese started naming so many of the island's natural features after the multiple shades of sea blue that surrounded them and not the welcoming gold of the rocks. There's the Blue Hole, a collapsed cave beneath the sea in Gozo, which leads into a 110m tunnel and out into the open sea. And the Blue Lagoon, the stretch of impossibly clear water, shallow enough to wade across, between the little island of Comino and its even smaller, uninhabited sister island Cominoto. On Malta itself one of the most spectacular is the Blue Grotto, the largest of six caves beneath a great arm of limestone, where, between dawn and midday the changes of light bounce off the white sand seabed, causing the sea to shimmer between shades of cyan, turquoise and deep navy blue. At some point the Maltese perhaps realised that they'd named too many geological wonders "blue". Which might be why they gave their most spectacular landmark the posher name of the Azure Window. The 28m-high limestone arch near Dwejra on the far west of Gozo, cut through by thousands of years of waves, is far too grand to be just a simple colour.

In 1928, though, local brewery Farsons decided the island had room for one more blue thing, when they created a new brand of beer, Blue Label, whose warm pungency, reminiscent of an English bitter, is a reminder that the island was a British colony from 1813 to 1964. Now the island is a rich mix of all the cultures that have washed up on its shores over millennia. The waves are still washing against the Azure Window and it's predicted that, within a few years, it will have to be renamed the Azure Pinnacle, as it finally crashes into the ocean. The blue backdrop, lit by 300 days a year of cloudless skies, will, however, remain forever.

BELLISSIMA MALTA (continues)

Charlene Mercieca Soap Queen

“My philosophy is that if something isn’t good enough to eat, you shouldn’t put it on your skin,” says Charlene Mercieca, founder of Malta’s Soap Café. “If one of my products says it’s chocolate and it smells and looks like chocolate, there’s actually raw cocoa in there.”



Her love for artisanal soap started when she was 16 and looking for a solution to recurring skin problems, and Mercieca is passionate about the process of making soaps. Commercially produced soap, she’s keen to point out, doesn’t have anything like the same care lavished on it. “It’s the difference between a really good Parmesan cheese and something cheap from the supermarket,” she says. “You’ll notice the difference.”

Though the products she sells at her Soap Café look and smell delicious, the venue’s name may be slightly misleading. “It’s called the Soap Café because I want people to come here and feel they can chat with us,” she explains. “We run classes and workshops – it’s not like a normal shop.” soapcafemalta.com



Robin Peers Peaceful Soldier Robin Peers admits that he was a bit nervous the last time he was in Malta. It was 1956 and he was a reserve soldier who’d been flown to the island to join up with a Royal Navy aircraft carrier on the way to attack Egypt. It was the military and political misadventure known as the Suez Crisis. “The navy wasn’t very happy having us onboard because there wasn’t much room,” he says. “The infantry and the commandos wanted to go down the Suez

Canal and get on with it but they were stopped.”

Fortunately for Peers and the rest of the 20,000 British reservists, the Soviet Union and USA refused to support the military action and they were soon sent home. After leaving the army Robin became a mechanical engineer and, now 83, he’s retired. Happily, the holiday he’s taking with his wife, Sheila, is rather quieter than his last visit. “Until this week I hadn’t been back to Malta. “I’m painting one of these magnificent boats with this extraordinary shape you don’t find anywhere else,” he says pointing to one of the local luzzu fishing boats. “I love wooden boats. They’re so rare in most parts of the world but here the boats are practically all wooden. I was just talking to a chap who was rubbing his boat down by hand. They take such pride in what they do.”



Catherine Moyle Blessed Therapist When alternative therapist Cat Moyle and her Italian boyfriend, Leo, came to Malta on holiday in 2011 they were already thinking of moving to the island. What happened next made up their minds for them. “On our last day we bought a lottery ticket,” she explains. “We thought no more of it but when we got back to England and checked our numbers we found out we’d won €1,000 [NOK8,465]!”

Unfortunately they hadn't read the small print. They realised the prize would probably have to be claimed in Malta but they didn't know they'd only have six weeks to do so. "We came back and ended up spending the money we'd won on Prosecco, nice lunches and generally having another indulgent weekend in Malta," she says. Since then she and Leo have moved to the island and she's set up her own firm, Pause // Play, offering similarly indulgent long weekends for visitors who want the kind of retreat where, as well as all the usual yoga, massage and meditation, they "get a bit of a holiday. We don't make them get up at 6am!" pauseplayescapes.com

Mary Bugeja Cleanliness Crusader



Mary Bugeja is cleaning her friends' house while they're on holiday. As well as being a housewife and mother of two grown-up sons, she does two hours of paid cleaning a day, and she can't resist sweeping the road in front of the house as well. "I like cleaning," she says. "I find it very satisfying. Last week I didn't feel very well and I was so mad with myself because I couldn't do any of the jobs I had to do. I just like everything to be clean and in its right place." She gets upset about people who litter the beaches and countryside of Malta, although she admits she doesn't visit its beauty spots as much as she should. "I've seen the

Azure Window about three times. It's so nice. Whenever I see it on television I think, 'I really should go and see it more often!'"

Chris Dennis Underwater Guru



When diving instructor Chris Dennis describes some of his favourite dives on the island, it's almost as if he's talking about a religious experience. "There's an underwater cave up on the north coast of Gozo called the Cathedral Cave," he says. "You go down and then surface inside it. It's huge and the light that comes in under the arch illuminates the whole thing in this azure blue. As your eyes adjust it becomes brighter and brighter in there. It's amazing. It's something I haven't seen anywhere else in the world. I've dived in Egypt and in Thailand and they have more fish but they don't have the scenery that we have here." Dennis says he's most relaxed underwater, where things we normally view warily take on a new life. "Jellyfish are awesome," he says. "You take them out of the water and they're just a pile of goo. But when you see them underwater they're huge

great things and they look like something out of science fiction. To me being underwater is as close to outer space as you can get without leaving the planet." diving-gozo.com

Joe Abela Last of the Ferrymen



From 4am until lunchtime, for ten days, Joe Abela will varnish his traditional dghajsa wooden boat until it's had at least six coats. "I love my boats," he says. "I was probably 12 when I first went onboard one. Now I have three of them and I enjoy working on them more than anything else. I have to keep them looking good for the tourists but when I finish varnishing one boat I go and work on my own."

Joe's father used to work on boats for the Royal Navy in an era when Valletta was one of the Britain navy's most important ports. At that time, the Great Harbour between Vittoriosa and Valletta would also have been full of hundreds of other little high-prowed wooden dghajsas.

"There used to be 4,000 of these boats but now there's just three or four hundred," he says. "There are people who have boats like these in their garage but they don't use them. My brother has one in his basement but it never goes in the water." Abela's boats are used strictly as water taxis. He says he'd never sully them by taking them out to the open water to fish. "I would never put wet fish on my boat!" he insists. "It would ruin the varnish."



VITTORIOSA (Birgu): an old fortified city of Malta



Birgu is one of the Three Cities, with Isla (Senglea) and Bormla (Cospicua). Birgu or **Vittoriosa** is one of the oldest cities on the Island, and it played an important role in the **Siege of Malta** in 1565. Birgu was once a main city and has a **long history of military and maritime activities**.

Birgu's position in the **Grand harbour** was of great importance and **several military leaders** wanted to take over the city. Therefore, the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans Byzantines, Arabs, Normans and the Aragonese all shaped and developed Birgu.

Birgu is a very old locality with its origins reaching back to

medieval times. Prior to the establishment of Valletta as capital and main city of Malta, military powers that wanted to rule the Maltese islands would need to obtain control of Birgu due to its significant position in the Grand Harbour. In fact, it served as the base of the Order of Saint John and de facto **capital city of Malta from 1530 to 1571**. Birgu is well known for its vital role in the Great Siege of Malta of 1565. Birgu is a unique city surrounded by **fortified walls**, ancient history, monuments and places that one can visit. Here below, you will see all attractions you can do in Birgu. The entrance to Birgu is via the Couvre Porte, while the parish church is dedicated to St. Lawrence. Brass bands clubs, processions and fireworks are among the attractions in such festivities.

There is another church dedicated to Our Lady of the Annunciation and is run by the Dominican Order. It is also known as St. Dominic Church, and a smaller feast is celebrated every last Sunday of August.

The Parish Church: The parish church of St. Lawrence was the Conventual church of the Knights of St. John.

Inquisitor's Palace: The Inquisitor's Palace was the seat of the Inquisition in Malta from 1571 to 1798. The Palace has now been converted into a museum but before, it had its own chapel, library and rooms. However, you can still see the dungeons and the courtyard. The Museum is open every day and houses the national museum of ethnography collection.

Malta Maritime Museum: Exhibits maritime history from ancient to more recent times. The collections are unique and outstanding, especially those concerning the warships of the Knights of St John. There are also paintings, weapons, uniforms, anchors, maps and models dating from 1530 to 1798.

Malta at War Museum: The Museum holds an exciting exhibition about the II World War in Malta, with an underground air raid shelter. There is also a viewing of a 30-minute original wartime



documentary. The museum exhibits a collection of wartime mementos, underground tunnels and audiovisuals. Open daily between 10:00 and 16:00.
Fort St. Angelo: After the Knights of Malta chose to settle in Birgu they made Fort St Angelo the seat of the Grand Master.

Vittoriosa seems to have been the second oldest parish in Malta after the Cathedral church. From 1530 to 1571 the church served as the conventual church of the Knights of st. John, while the Annunciation church was the Parish Church. The present church was built between 1681 and 1697 by Lorenzo Gafà; it became the seat of a Collegiate chapter in 1820.

Other Churches in Vittoriosa

HOLY CROSS CHAPEL - The chapel was built in 1720 on the site of the old cemetery; it received considerable damage during the war and had to be rebuilt. The statues of the good Friday procession are kept in the chapel.

Church Of Our Lady Of Mount Carmel - The church was built by the crews of the order's galleys. These people considered the church as their own and used it for their religious duties. The church was destroyed during the Second World War, and later it was rebuilt.

Holy Trinity Church - The church was built by the noble Lucrezia Gauci Falzon in 1784; completely destroyed During the war, it was rebuilt and today it is used for meetings by religious associations.

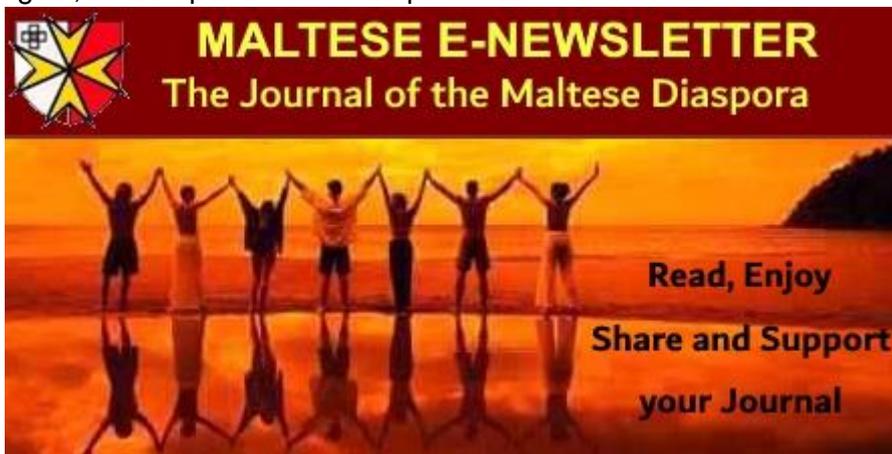
CHURCH OF ST PHILIP - The church was first built in the fifteenth century and rebuilt in 1561; bishop Labini consecrated the church, while bishop balaguer gave it to the Oratorians of st. Philip Neri; When the oratorians left Malta, the church was taken over by the parish. It suffered damage during the war but although the damage was repaired, it is kept closed.

CHAPEL OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS AT TAL-ĦAWLI - The Chapel was opened to serve as a centre of pastoral activity among the residents of the locality.

Churches Run By The Religious

MONASTERY OF ST SCHOLASTICA - One of the Benedictine monasteries of mdina was transferred to Vittoriosa and when the Knights of St. John took their residence to Valletta, the hospital they had at Vittoriosa was given to the nuns as their monastery. In 1679 the church and part of the monastery were built again, and the church was consecrated by bishop labini on the 29 September 1788. The relics of the martyr, St. Veneranda, brought from Rome in 1728, are venerated in the church. Dedication date: 29 September 1787

ANNUNCIATION CHURCH - The Dominicans arrived in Vittoriosa in 1528 and the church of the annunciation was given to them. From 1530 to 1571 the church served as the Parish Church of Vittoriosa as the Knights of St. John had taken the Parish Church of St. Lawrence to be their conventual church. The church was rebuilt in 1638 and was totally destroyed three centuries later during the last war. Rebuilt again, it was opened for worship in 1960.



What a wonderful way to keep in touch with other Maltese all over the world



RESTORING VILLA DRAGO IN SLIEMA

Villa Drago, which has stood as a prominent landmark in Sliema for over 150 years, is about to undergo a dramatic revitalisation involving painstaking restoration and conversion which will enable it to take pride of place in the proposed Townsquare project.

The lead architect for the proposed mixed-use development is Martin Xuereb, of award-winning architectural firm Martin Xuereb and Associates, who says that the restoration of the villa could begin soon after permits are in place, since it stands alone from the rest of the project.

“The restored villa will give the whole project a special ambience. The first impression that people will gain as they walk in is the old grandeur – it was, after all, an anchor to Sliema and what Sliema was about – and the building will act like a hub for Townsquare.”

According to conservation architect Edward Said, who prepared the restoration method statement on the property, Villa Drago is one of the last of its kind to survive in Sliema, “matched only perhaps by Villa Portelli at Savoy as a fully detached late 19th century stately residence”.

“Villa Drago is a fine example of a rare style we call Maltese Palladianism which was championed at the end of the 19th century by the respected architect Francesco Zammit, one of Malta’s most prolific architects of his era,” although the design is reportedly attributed to the acclaimed architect Giuseppe Bonavia.

“It stands in relatively sound condition. Most of the internal restoration is envisaged to be cosmetic, apart from the replacement of some of the ceilings, if required, after further investigation. The front garden will also be fully restored in accordance with the method statement of this listed building,” Mr Said explained.

Mr Xuereb said the challenge posed by this restoration is somewhat unusual in that buildings of a similar age are usually fairly well preserved externally, but have undergone significant changes internally. Villa Drago is the opposite. “The main issues relate to the façade, which had been painted by the previous owners. Removing this paint while at the same time preserving the patina of the natural stone, will be a detailed and a laborious job. The exterior may require crucial reconstruction works and restoration. Inside, however, there is not much damage and there have been no internal accretions.”

Mr Xuereb ought to know. His many projects include Palazzo de Piro in Rabat – which had been altered significantly to be used as a school – and, more recently, the restored Cittadella in Gozo, for which he has received the highest praise. The most significant intervention on Villa Drago is likely to be the removal of the previous owners’ 1970s extension to the first-floor at the rear of the property in order to reinstate the terrace, while most of the *piano nobile* ceilings are in need of maintenance.

Mr Xuereb is particularly impressed by the villa’s imposing grand staircase, which he enthuses is the most beautiful internal feature. The villa’s front gardens – which will be preserved and enriched to link up with the rest of the project – will also be brought back to life. All species of trees, identified as part of the original scheme, will be retained and the landscaping will be as close to the original as possible.

Given this is a highly specialised job, Mr Xuereb will be teaming up with Italian landscaping architects Paisa, whose portfolio includes several acclaimed projects ranging from gardens to urban parks, together with respected Maltese landscape architect Antoine Gatt who has established a reputation for environmentally sensitive and sustainable designs.



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Josianne Cutajar

Emotional Case for Tunnel:

'Gozo can no longer remain a Christmas Crib'

Gozo-Malta tunnel will not herald the environmental destruction of Gozo, Josianne Cutajar insists [Tim Diacono](#)

Gozitan MEP candidate Josianne Cutajar last night urged critics of the proposed tunnel between Malta and Gozo to put themselves in the shoes of a Gozitan resident who has to commute on the ferry everyday.

"Some people enjoy seeing Gozo kind of stuck in a time capsule, but Gozo cannot remain a Christmas crib (*presepiju*)," Cutajar, who is running for the Labour Party, said at a campaign rally in Xlendi.

"The tunnel will lead to a better quality of life for those of us who frequently travel to Malta, for those parents who end up separated from their children because they would have no other option but to move to Malta due to their job or studies, for those who rent at sky-high prices in Malta simply so that they can live close to their workplace, for those who wake up at dawn everyday just to arrive to work on time, for those who are forced to slam their foot on the gas pedal so as not to miss the ferry when heading to work or when returning to their family."

Visibly emotional, Cutajar recounted how she had to move to Malta when she was 17 so that she could read for a university degree.

"I had to share a room and a house with other people because I couldn't afford to do otherwise," she said. "It was tough for me, and I had to grow up quickly and face certain realities."

The young MEP candidate and Nadur councillor played down environmental concerns that a permanent link between Malta and Gozo will open the floodgates for rampant development in Gozo.

"I don't want to see Gozo all built up, and I enjoy the fact that countryside still separates our towns and villages from each other," she said. "However, I don't believe the tunnel will necessarily precede environmental destruction. What are we scared of? Us Gozitans are renowned for not putting the cart before the horse and for planning properly and I am confident that this project will not erode Gozo, but rather help it progress, so long as the work is carried out properly and so long as we strive for balance."



102-Year-Old Ship in Sydney Became A Floating Forest

For all those whose heart starts beating faster when they see something old and abandoned, Homebush Bay in Sydney is the place to visit. This is where many 20th century ships, which are no longer used, ended up: one of them, the SS Ayrfield, is definitely the most impressive sight for all the lush flora, growing in its rusted hull. The fully-grown

mangrove trees earned this 102-year-old, 1,140-tonne ship the *Floating Forest* name among the locals. The SS Ayrfield served as a collier on the sixty-miler run between Newcastle and Sydney and would transport the supplies to American troops in the Pacific Ocean. The ship was brought to the Bay back in 1972 to be dismantled, but the operations eventually ceased and the bay no longer served as a ship wrecking yard. The SS Ayrfield, along with many other ships that were used during WW2, were simply left there to decay.

Besides its history for ship-breaking and the spooky ship cemetery, Homebush Bay is home to the Olympic Stadium today as well. Although there are people, passionate about photographing various abandoned objects, many tourists are drawn to the bay because of the Floating Forest alone. What a sight!



CONCERT WITH A PURPOSE

The **PAPPLEWICK SCHOOL CHOIR** will be performing on **SATURDAY 16th February 2019** at St. John of the Cross Parish Church Ta' Xbiex starting at **7.15pm**. This concert is in full collaboration with Ta' Xbiex Local Council and the Discaled Carmelite Fairs. This event is part of the celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the Parish Church.

The second concert will be take place at the Transfiguration Parish Church in Hal-Lija on **SUNDAY 17th February 2019** starting at **6.30pm**. The concert is in full collaboration with Hal Lija Local Council and the Parish Church

which this year is marking the centenary celebration of the Church.

The third concert will be on **MONDAY 18th February 2019** starting at **6.30pm**. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Pompeii in Marsaxlokk will be hosting this last concert.

The JP2 Foundation is hosting the mentioned three concerts by the Papplewick School Choir. This school is a boys' day and boarding prep school in Ascot UK, opposite the famous racecourse. There are about 210 pupils and although a non-selective school, Papplewick has an impressive record for the boys achieving scholarships to the major public schools such as Eton and Harrow. The school is proud to have been chosen as the Tatler "Prep School of the Year" in 2019.

Membership of the chapel choir is keenly sought. The boys rehearse daily and lead Saturday Matins with a weekly anthem, supported by staff and parents. They also sing at school concerts and musicals. They have recently taken part in the Wellington College Choral Day and sang in a Royal School of Church Music Young Voices Festival. Many of the boys play instruments to a high standard and there is a long tradition of choristers gaining music scholarships.

This is Papplewick Choir's first overseas tour and the boys are very excited and pleased to be performing in Malta.

Choir director Chris Goodwin was appointed organist at Papplewick eight years ago. He was organ scholar at Pembroke College, Cambridge and subsequently studied organ under Dr John Birch at the Royal College of Music. He has lived and worked in Ascot for some thirty years. He was organist and choirmaster at Ascot Parish Church and is much involved in local schools and musical theatre. He is now Director of Chapel Music at Papplewick and also Director of Music at St Andrew's Parish Church, Sonning-on-Thames. The general public is invited to attend, entrance to the concerts is free but donations will be welcome.

Maltese expat forced to leave home as floods ravage northeast Australia

Evacuated by boat to a military base



Flood-affected people are evacuated from Townsville, Queensland, Australia. Photo: AFP

At least one Maltese expat was forced to leave her home after entire neighbourhoods were evacuated due to heavy rainfall and flash flooding that devastated parts of northeast Australia for nearly two weeks.

John Dougall told the Times of Malta his 30-year-old daughter, Ilona, was forced to climb into a military

boat that picked her from where the road once lay and leave her house behind as a third evacuation warning was sounded in her neighbourhood of Rosslea in a matter of days.

The woman is now living in a military base with her husband, sleeping on stretchers, having also spent some time in an emergency evacuation centre in a school gymnasium.

"We were worried when we started hearing about how bad the situation really was. Luckily, our daughter is okay but many in the area lost everything," Mr Dougall said.

A monsoon ravaged parts of north Queensland, particularly the coastal city of Townsville where Mr Dougall's daughter has lived for some two years.

In the space of 10 days, Townsville received more than its annual average rainfall and broke records in terms of successive days of rain exceeding 50mm.

I'm just happy she is safe. Now it is a matter of taking it day by day

Images of roofs of family homes barely breaking over the surface of the murky brown flood water made the international headlines in recent days and Mr Dougall said he felt lucky his daughter had bought her home on rather high ground.

"Unlike many in Townsville, my daughter's home is not on low ground, so it took only about 60cm of water rather than several metres," he said.

Still, the water that had entered her house was mixed with affluent and had damaged power points and furniture.

"The rain and wind started to die down, so my daughter could head back to the house to check the damage. You could say that, unlike others, Ilona is lucky that she maintained her home insurance, which means she is covered for the damages," Mr Dougall said.

The Insurance Council of Australia said on Monday it had revised upwards its estimate of insurance losses. This was now put at about €29 million, involving some 3,500 claims.

The council expects that figure to rise significantly as people return to their homes. This has been occurring gradually throughout the week, although the authorities insist many homes are still unsafe.

Some banks have even suspended home loan repayments for three months for those impacted by the floods and had to make emergency works.

Waiting to hear from his daughter, with whom he has maintained contact through online messaging apps, Mr Dougall said the whole experience of watching the news and seeing an entire suburb underwater was "quite surreal".

"I'm just happy she is safe. Now it is a matter of taking it day by day," he said.

Nine-metre 'airship' to grace Bormla's pier

Artist Matthew Pandolfino has been working on the dgħajsa tar-riħ structure for three years after his proposal won a competition in 2016 by **David Hudson**



Artist Matthew Pandolfino and his metal structure Dgħajsa tar-Riħ. (Photo: James Bianchi/MediaToday)

Dgħajsa tar-riħ is a massive nine-metre long metal structure, weighing three tonnes, comprising of a dgħajsa tal-pass (water taxi) and a zeppelin.

The structure is the brainchild of artist Matthew Pandolfino and will be installed at Bormla's Dock 1 next April.

Pandolfino has been working on the structure for three years at the J. Lautier metallurgy workshop in Qormi after

winning, along with five other artists, a competition sponsored by the government in 2016.

"I love Bormla. This structure is an amalgamation of Bormla's air and sea history," Pandolfino said as he explained how thousands of water taxis were used in Bormla to transfer people and cargo during the British rule.

The structure is inspired by the water taxis that ploughed their trade in Bormla. (Photo: James Bianchi/MediaToday)

Pandolfino said that Dock No. 1 had also been used in the 1920s for the building of airplanes but this eventually encountered issues of humidity.

It's this historical detail that inspired Pandolfino.

"The structure will be kinetic so that people will be able to interact with it. I want it to become a landmark eventually," he said, adding that the skeletal structure might get lost in the area but that the metal skeleton will be quite at home close to the dockyard.

The former Prime Minister Dom Mintoff's memorial is also installed close by and will soon be accompanied by the "Dgħajsa tar-riħ."

Infrastructure Minister Ian Borg said that the 2016 competition will be repeated this year and that deadline for submissions is 12 April.

Artists have to collaborate with local councils and come up with an idea of an artistic piece together, both in terms of logistics and local culture.

The artist won a competition in 2016 for street art projects. (Photo: James Bianchi/MediaToday)

A total of €30,000 will be given to each of the six artists chosen to work on the project.

Culture Minister Owen Bonnici said that this competition increased the quality of art in the country, the accessibility of the artworks and the promotion of the artists.

"This project meets these three aims. It is competition-based so the quality increases. The art is accessible because it will be installed in a public place and it is promoting the careers of these artists. We want to see people take photographs with artistic pieces of our local artists around the island," he said.

This journal is the mouthpiece of Maltese living in Malta and Abroad. It reaches families, schools, nursing homes, associations, parliamentarians, government departments in Australia and Malta and other agencies. It is truly linking members of the Maltese Diaspora. Let's support this journal to make it even stronger and share it with all our members of the family and friends. L. B. Farrugia (Malta)

WHAT IS THE COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD?

The Government of Malta set up the Council of Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA) in 2011. Following the Convention of Maltese Living Abroad held in March 2010, the Government of Malta published a draft Bill proposing to set up a Council for Maltese Living Abroad. The Council is made up of a group of persons selected by Malta's Government after taking into consideration the organisational set up of the Maltese communities overseas together with another person living in Malta who is versed in matters relating to Maltese living abroad. The Minister of Foreign Affairs chairs the Council. The majority of its members are from overseas.

The Objectives of the Council are:

- To promote the quality of life of the Maltese communities abroad;
- To strengthen political, cultural, economical and social ties between the Maltese communities abroad and Malta;
- To facilitate the preservation of a cultural and linguistic identity among the community;
- To promote Maltese culture and in particular the teaching of the Maltese language abroad;
- To assist in the integration of the communities in their adopted countries;
- To analyse problems which Maltese communities encounter including issues relating to working conditions, professional and educational training and recognition of qualifications obtained by Malta;
- To advise the Minister of Foreign Affairs on any legislation or issue that can affect the interests of Maltese abroad.

The Council have representatives from different countries including Australia, USA, Canada, UK, France and the rest of the EU. The current Council members for NSW are Emanuel Camilleri and Marisa Previtiera

During the Annual two-day meeting, the Council members can bring to the attention of the Government of Malta their proposals from the Maltese community in NSW that they represent.

I can be contacted by email on sliema52@icloud.com or alternatively, contact Emanuel Camilleri on lelicam@live.co.uk We want you to tell us of issues affecting you as an individual or for your local Maltese community groups or associations that we may not be aware of. This information could be very relevant to the needs of the Maltese community here in NSW or when visiting Malta.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Tastes of Malta and South Africa served up in Mackay

by taracassidy



THE tastes of Malta and South Africa are being served up in Mackay, thanks to the launch of new online business, 'Souk Gourmet'. Having travelled the world through work for the past 10 years, mother of one Julia Mullanphy wanted to figure out a way of making international foods more available in Mackay. She combined her love of cooking, travels and Maltese background with the need to find a job that would allow her to spend time with her new son Jack, and so 'Souk Gourmet' was born.

"I was visiting all the souks in the Middle East and Africa and I just came up with this idea that I wanted to create a place where people could buy food from all parts of the world," Ms Mullanphy said.



"I was working part-time after coming back from maternity leave and I wanted some flexibility to be able to spend time with my son. I'd been thinking about doing it (the business) for years and just figured now's the time to do this.

"My original idea was to open a store, but with a young family I thought it could be hard, so I came up with the concept of an online store where we do deliveries and provide a unique experience for customers."

Ms Mullanphy said her love for cooking and food began at home, learning from her Nuna and Aunty Joyce, then travelling to her family's home country and the rest of the world.

She is in the process of adding a variety of her family's Maltese recipes to the Souk Gourmet website for customers to try and learn different ways of using the products.

Julia Mullanphy is selling Maltese and South African cuisine online. **Contributed**

"I've got some great Maltese recipes that people are enjoying cooking so I decided a recipe section would be a good way of explaining how to use my products and give them a new style to try at home," she said.

"We've been running for five weeks and the feedback I've gotten so far is that people are enjoying being able to cook something different, easy and that tastes really good.

"They're also loving the human contact aspect, they can come and talk to me and put in requests for things they want that they wouldn't at a big supermarket."

Ms Mullanphy hopes to expand the business in future, to include North African, Zimbabwean and Islander food products.

"Those are definitely communities I'd like to explore, if the demand is there, and I'd also love to be able to reach and provide service to areas more north, south and west of Mackay," she said.

"In the long term I'd love to have an international grocer/cafe where people can come and talk about the food, purchase the food and eat the food, with good coffee, of course."

To purchase Souk Gourmet products, you can head to www.thesoukgourmet.com.au

Great publication. I enjoy reading it immensely. A fountain of information for everyone. Prosit to you and those who are involved in this journal. Deserve it. Keep up the good work. There is something with this publication which ties together the Maltese in many different countries. Thanks. Joe Lanzon (Malta)

Ravjul / Ravioli with Ricotta Filling, Maltese Style

These white glistening ravioli were one of the many traditions in my family that seemed to have slowly disappeared to make way for the ready made frozen version. Not anymore...

I still remember these being made at home in Agnes Banks (Australia) by my mother and then watching them cooking in the pot. The one thing my mother did which I forgot to do was make little markings on the edges of the ravioli with a fork. Not necessary but personally I think these ravioli would have been that little bit more special if I had.

I see Maltese ravioli mainly bought nowadays but they really are not that difficult to make if you have a bit of spare time. Nothing really does compare to home made.

I made my ravioli using one piece of pastry cut out with a medium size round biscuit cutter and then folded over once the mixture was put in the centre. You can do these however you want to do them but this is my preferred way.

I also used Maltese cheese to make my ravioli but you can use ricotta if you don't have the cheeselets. When the dough is initially made it is kept in the fridge for a least two hours before rolling out. This just helps the elasticity of the dough and makes it easier to roll out.

The other important thing about these ravioli is that the tomato sauce is simple. All that is needed is some olive oil, a few cloves of garlic, passata, and salt and pepper.

My recipe makes about 4 trays of ravioli. The ravioli can either be boiled immediately or frozen and then used another time. If freezing make sure to freeze the ravioli on trays first and then place in containers and put back in the freezer. If you put the ravioli straight into containers they will stick together!. Here is a simple recipe:

Sift together

200 g semolina

200 g flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

Add

1 egg

enough water to make a dough

Roll dough out very thinly, form into long strips about 10 cm wide.

FILLING

Mix

400 g ricotta

2 eggs

1 Tablespoon chopped parsley

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1/2 teaspoon salt



The filling should be placed on the lower half of the pastry strip, a teaspoonful at a time, about 4 cm apart.

Turn the upper half of the pastry over the lower part, covering the filling.

After moistening your fingers, press down the sides of each *ravjola*.

Cut each *ravjola* with a pastry cutter.

Cook *ravjul* in boiling salted water for 8 to 10 minutes.

Strain well and serve with tomato sauce, topped with parmesan cheese.

The Bechamel Sauce would be nice, too.

Yes, this is a ravioli recipe.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARTEFACTS FOUND NEAR GHAR DALAM

Excavation works right outside Ghar Dalam have revealed animal bones and other archaeological artefacts, which could potentially have come from inside the cave when earth was

removed many years ago.

Heritage Malta is conducting some excavation works, in conjunction with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, at the site near Ghar Dalam.

Culture Minister Owen Bonnici said that Ghar Dalam is still being discovered, and such excavatory work is one such example which lead to archaeological findings.

He described the cave as a unique site, and that it forms part of a golden triangle with the Borg in-Nadur temples and Ta' Kaccatura sites



Heritage Malta Chairman Anton Refalo said that Heritage Malta's mission statement follows three binaries.

The first, he said, is to preserve Maltese heritage. The second, is to make it accessible to the public. The third, is to show Malta's heritage to both locals and tourists.

He said that culture does not belong to the few, and spoke of Heritage Malta's role in teaching the public about the island's history.

He highlighted that the project being conducted at Ghar Dalam forms part

of a wider project, which will eventually see Ghar Dalam, the Borg in-Nadur temples and Ta' Kaccatura merged into one large exhibit where people would be able to walk from one to the other.

Photos: Alenka Falzon.





APPEAL

Dear Mr. Scicluna Your journal is very interested and very enjoyable to see and to read. I am always waiting for it to see what is new in it.

By the way, even I have worked in Australia for four years, from 1977 - 1981. This

It was during the the war of Ethiopia. I was sent there to take over a School from

Other sisters whom they wanted to give this school to us, and this was:

St. Patrick School at Port Kembla. I tell you this was of great experience and joy To be teaching there, but when the war stopped, I was called to go back to continue My mission there. When I have finished my mission there I was sent to Kenya to Start another mission where I have been here since 1993.

Now to build a Boarding and School for the poor children, and I am looking for Benefactors

And people of good will to help us fulfilling our dream.

Please, Please I humbly ask you, if you can publish this message to find people of good will and generous heart to help us I will highly appreciated.

May God bless you and keep you well to continue working for the Maltese Community in Australia.

Sincerely Yours

Sr. Michelina Micallef FCJ

Sister Micela Micallef is a Maltese Franciscan nun who has been working in Africa for 54 years - 29 years in Ethiopia and 25 in Kenya



Loranne Vella takes national book prize for Rokit

Fantasy novel and eco-fiction is winner of overall book category for National Book Prize 2018 by **Matthew Vella**

Author Loranne Vella has won the Maltese national book prize with her fantasy novel

Rokit, published by Merlin Publishers.

The novel explores multiple themes, among them the fragmentation of Europe as Petrel leaves Croatia to explore his grandmother's Maltese roots, to find Malta under siege by the effects of global warming.

Antoine Cassar won the first prize in poetry with his collection Erbghin jum (EDE Books). No winners were there in the short stories, drama and translation categories as none of the entries had been shortlisted.

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 197 December 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

MDINA
La Città' Notabile
The Noble City

Most honor of the MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER WAS AWARDED A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EDITION

MDINA THE OLD AND SILENT CITY OF MALTA

www.maltesejournal.com

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 178 July 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

EDITOR: FRANK L. SCILUNA

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

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

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 166 November 2017

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L. Sciluna GAM JP Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

Il-Bewsa tan-Nanna

Waqt il Toninu kien qiegħed jaqra Il-qattus ma qanbu U kelb daqs naqra Dahlet in-nanna rikissa inkiss U l-oħra b'ingrazz, kif kien taqta

WE STILL LOVE MALTA

When a Maltese and an Australian are elderly they are generally well respected and well loved in their own and adopted lands. When you go back to Malta, please tell that we still love Malta, but there has been never stopped loving our country. We will come back because our children and grandchildren live here. This grandmother's story is very common in Australia among the many Maltese who settled in Australia and other countries.

Priscilla Miskuba Prof. A. Cuschieri

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 198 - CHRISTMAS EDITION - December 2017

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L. Sciluna GAM JP Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

CHILD IS BORN

Merry Christmas
Il-Milind it-Tajjeb

Christmas Edition

Dedicated to all Maltese living all over the world

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 194 November 2017

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Mgr. Charles J. Scicluna
Archbishop of Malta

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 190 October 2017

The lovely and friendly people of Malta and Gozo

A SPECIAL FEATURE ON DAPHNE CARUANA GALIZIA

The Maltese eNewsletter
The Journal of the MALTESE DIASPORA

Editor: Frank L. Sciluna GAM Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

THE LINK BETWEEN MALTESE LIVING IN MALTA AND ABROAD

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L. Sciluna GAM JP Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

THE MALTESE DIASPORA READS, ENJOYS, SHARES AND SUPPORTS THE JOURNAL

PACKED WITH INFO OF INFORMATION, CULTURE, HISTORY AND HERITAGE, ARTS AND MUSIC AND PROFILES OF MALTESE LIVING IN MALTA AND BEYOND ITS SHORES

Folk Dancing in the Village Square in Malta

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L. Sciluna Contact: maltesejournal@gmail.com

The locals reading about the award on the Times of Malta

To honour her brave people I award the George Cross to the Island Fortress of Malta to bear witness to a heroism and devotion that will long be famous in history.

King George VI April 15th 1942

1942: Malta awarded George Cross medal for bravery

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER January 2018

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor: Frank L. Sciluna GAM Contact: maltesejournal@gmail.com

Top (L. to R): Australia Day - Maltese American Benevolent Society Inc. Chinese New Year. Middle: Traditional costume - Maltese Bus - Mosta Church. Bottom: Hoba ta-Zej - Triton Fountain - Knights of Malta

FONDAZZJONI BELT VICTORIA VO/0762 Gozo NGOs**Association founding member Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria VCT
1101 info@heartofgozo.org.mt****Media release: Talk about Mro Vella @ Il-Ħaġar**

The next lecture at Il-Ħaġar museum (Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria) will be delivered in English by Dr Maria Frendo on Friday 22 February at 7.30 pm on the anniversary of Joseph Vella's sudden demise last year. This, the first Joseph Vella memorial lecture, is titled "Joseph Vella: A Man for all Seasons" and will be followed with the official opening of a temporary Exhibition about Professor Vella as a pioneer in the use of Maltese texts. Il-Ħaġar is the proud owner of the Joseph Vella Music Archive, donated by him on this cultural centre's fifth anniversary. Entrance is free but booking on events@heartofgozo.org.mt is recommended.

Other events for these anniversaries include two concerts on Saturday: sacred motets by the Liverpool Cathedral Choir (St George's Basilica at noon) and Joseph Vella's compositions (Aula Mgr Giuseppe Farrugia at 8pm). Sunday 24 offers 11am Mass with the participation of the Laudate Pueri Choir at St George's and Lunch.

Taħdita fl-ewwel anniversarju mill-mewt tas-Surmast Joe Vella It-taħdita li jmiss fil-mużew Il-Ħaġar (Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria) se ttiha bl-Ingliż Dr Maria Frendo l-Ġimgħa 22 ta' Frar fis-7.30 pm fl-ewwel anniversarju minn meta sSurmast Joe Vella ħalliena tant bla ħsieb.

L-ewwel Joseph Vella memorial lecture jisimha Joseph Vella: A Man for all Seasons. Wara jsir il-ftuħ ufficijali ta' wirja temporanja dwar il-professur bħala pijunier fl-użu ta' testi Maltin. Kif nafu, fil-ħames anniversarju ta' daċ-ċentru kulturali, ta l-Joseph Vella Music Archive lill-Ħaġar ftit sigħat qabel mewtu. M'hemmx ħlas tad-dħul iżda nirrikmandaw nota fuq events@heartofgozo.org.mt.

Attivitajiet oħra għal dawn l-anniversarji jinkludu żewġ kunċerti s-Sibt: mutetti sagri mill-Liverpool Cathedral Choir (fil-Bażilika ta' San Ġorġ f'nofsinhar) u kompożizzjonijiet tiegħu (fl-Awla Mons Farrugia fit-8pm)

DISAPPOINTMENT

THE MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA has been involved in the Australia Day Parade for a number of years. Over the years and for a variety of reasons the number of Maltese taking part in the Parade has dwindled considerably. The Maltese Community Council launched a series of adverts on the Maltese Community Radio and via this Journal encouraging Maltese to participate in this year's Parade. However to no avail.

It saddens me to report that at the 2019 Australia Day Parade in Adelaide only 4 Maltese represented our culture. Those 4 people proudly walked, waved flags and wished everyone a Happy Australia Day along the way. I know that some people had genuine and valid reasons as to why they could not take part, but where were all the other Maltese? Could they not have spared a couple of hours to represent their culture, their heritage, their roots? What a very sad state of affairs. I cannot convey to you the deep disappointment that I feel. Not because there were only 4 representatives but because of the lack of interest and complacency that seems to have crept into our Maltese community.

I wish to sincerely thank the people that did make the effort to take part in the Parade - more power to you!!

Carmen Spiteri MCC Secretary

Michelle Muscat pays a visit to the FSWS Gozo Branch



Michelle Muscat, Chairperson of the Marigold Foundation and wife of the Prime Minister, visited the Foundation for Social Welfare Services Gozo Branch Operations on Friday.

Mrs Muscat was welcomed by the staff and presented with a selection of art pieces that had been produced during the 2017 UNESCO Art Camp which was held in Gozo. Following the

presentation, a meeting was held during which future collaboration between the Marigold Foundation, the FSWS and the PDM UNESCO was discussed.



Mrs Muscat signed the visitors book and her message read – “Such a pleasure to revisit these offices again and witness the dedication that you apply to furthering the aims of UNESCO and those of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services operating from here.

“May you keep up your energies so that this work flourishes for the well being of our communities. With best wishes Michelle Muscat, Chair of the Marigold Foundation, Spouse of the Prime Minister. 8th February 2019” Before concluding her visit Mrs Muscat presented

Attard being turned into a 'concrete jungle'



Transport Malta 'not keen or helpful' with cycling initiatives - AD

Low-rise houses in whole streets in Attard are being demolished turning the locality into a concrete jungle, *Aly*.

Attard is choked with traffic and unbridled construction, AD chairman Carmel Cacopardo told a news conference, blaming especially the rationalisation scheme approved in 2006.

The massive increase in building density is also leading to a large increase in cars in a small area and consequently an increase in traffic and the degradation of air quality.

In the past week, AD submitted its views during the public consultation exercise for the cycling strategy but claimed that Transport Malta is "not keen or helpful" when it comes to this kind of transport.

Attard is situated in an area of Malta in which travel from one locality to another on foot or by bicycle is rather easy.

Reducing the maximum speed in residential areas to 30 kilometres per hour, as well as investment in widespread infrastructure to encourage the use of bicycles would help cushion the problem, he said.



Malta Occupied by the Order of St. John

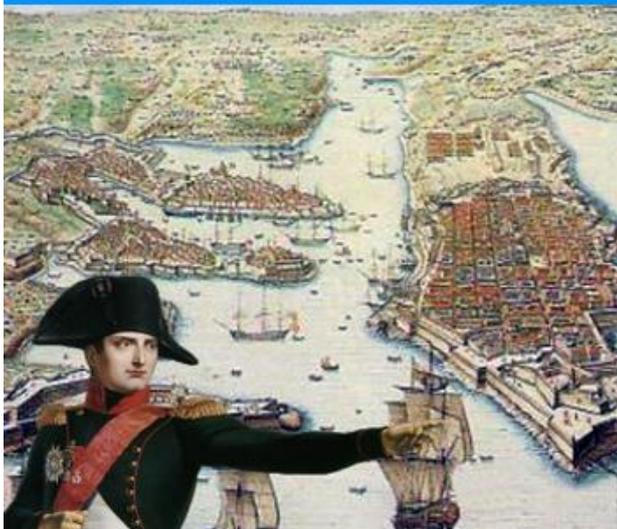
The Order OF St John remained without a territory of its own until 1530, when Grand Master Fra' Philippe de Villiers de l'Isle Adam took possession of the island of Malta, granted to the Order by Emperor Charles V with the approval of Pope Clement VII. It was decided that the Order should remain neutral in any war between Christian

nations.

In 1565 the knights, led by Grand Master Fra' Jean de la Vallette defended the island for more than three months during the Great Siege of the Ottomans. Following this victory the city and port of La Valletta was built and named after the Grand Master, its founder. The knights transformed Malta, undertaking urban construction projects: palaces and churches were built, as well as formidable new defence bastions and gardens. Architecture flourished as well as artistic patronage. The island was given a large new hospital, considered to be one of the best organised and most effective in the world. A school of anatomy was also founded and the faculty of medicine followed. In particular, the Order contributed to the development of ophthalmology and pharmacology. As well as these activities, for centuries the Order of Malta's fleet took part in the most important manoeuvres in the Mediterranean against the Ottoman fleet and against North African pirates.

Malta Occupied by the French

The Conflict for Malta, 1798 – 1802
The Napoleon and French Invasion



Napoleon's forces surrendered to the British in Malta on September 5th, 1800.

The knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, or Knights Hospitallers, driven out of their stronghold of Rhodes by the Turks, moved to Malta in 1530, making Valletta one of the strongest fortress cities in Europe. In 1798, however, Napoleon Bonaparte arrived on his way to Egypt and demanded that his ships be allowed into the Grand Harbour to take on water. When he was refused, he put troops ashore and sent the Knights packing. Many of the islanders were relieved to be free of them, but as the French began to apply sound revolutionary principles involving heavy taxes, higher interest rates and an attack on the Roman Catholic Church, relief turned to resentment. An uprising in September confined the French garrison of some 4,000 men under General Vaubois to Valletta and the other

fortified towns.

At this point the British intervened. A modest naval force was sent to assist the islanders, commanded by Captain Alexander Ball. Ball mounted a blockade and smoothed over the mutual suspicions and hostilities of the Maltese insurgent leaders. The siege settled down to a question of who would starve to death first,

the French or the Maltese. In December 1799 British troops arrived to increase pressure on the French and in February 1800 reinforcements came from the Two Sicilies. The islanders were suffering desperately from hunger and disease, but the plight of the French was worse: by August they had eaten all the dogs and cats in Valletta.

In early September Vaubois sent word to Major-General Henry Pigot, commanding the British troops, that he was ready to surrender; the capitulation was signed on the 5th after negotiations to which the Maltese were not invited. The French were to withdraw to Marseilles - the British had no way of feeding them if they were taken prisoner - while the British wondered whether to return Malta to the Knights of St John. Ball urged keeping the islands as a naval base and a centre for trade. Nelson disagreed and the London government bided its time, while Ball was left to run Malta.

In 1802 Malta was returned to the Order of St John as part of the Peace of Amiens, but a delegation of Maltese arrived in London, demanding to be placed under the rule of George III and his successors. The peace did not hold, Nelson changed his mind, and the British remained in control. Ball, who loved Malta and was very popular there, ran the islands until his death in 1809. In 1812 a commission reported it 'a matter of gratification to find that in opposition to some representations made by a small disaffected party in the island, the great mass and body of the people were happy and contented; warm in their professions of attachment to Great Britain, and thriving in wealth and population to a degree almost unprecedented.'



Thomas Graham

An 18th century silver salver was presented by the people of Malta to Brigadier General Thomas Graham in gratitude for his role in the liberation of the island from French control during the siege of Malta 1798-1800.

The French Navy captured Malta in June 1798 en route to Egypt where Napoleon had ambitions to confront the British and force an end to the French Revolutionary wars which had started in 1792. Napoleon garrisoned 3,000 troops on the island but their behaviour, particularly in looting the Roman Catholic Churches to pay for the Egyptian expedition, so outraged the Maltese that in September they rose in revolt and drove the French into the port city of Valletta. In the meantime, Lord Nelson had destroyed the French fleet in the Battle of the Nile on 1 August leaving the Royal Navy and its allies in control of the Mediterranean.

The Allies instituted a naval and land blockade and it was during the latter that Brigadier General Graham earned the gratitude of the people of Malta. Outnumbered by the French, Graham pursued a policy of starving the enemy out. This was so punishing that by the time the French finally surrendered in September 1800 they were losing men at the rate of 100 a day.

The inscription on the salver reads: "TRIBUTO DI RICONOSCENZA DEL POPOLO MATLESE AL SIG R GRAHAM BRIGADIERE GENERALE DELLE TRUPPE ALLEATE NELL' ASSEDIO DI MALTA 1800", which translated means "A token of gratitude from the people of Malta to Mr Graham Brigadier General of the Allied Troops at the siege of Malta 1800."

Malta received 2.6 million tourists in 2018

Tourist expenditure in Malta in 2018 amounted to €2.1 billion, figures released by the National Statistics Office [show](#)
by **David Hudson**



2018 saw a surge of tourists throughout the year

Tourism Minister Konrad Mizzi announced after a National Statistics Office (NSO) report was published saying the same that 2.6 million tourists came to Malta in 2018. Mizzi held a press conference in Conspicua, with the theme Sustaining Success, where he summarised the findings of the NSO report.

"Our vision is to become the best destination in the Mediterranean," he said,

adding that Malta had become the least seasonal destination in the Mediterranean in 2018, welcoming tourists throughout the year.

2018, Mizzi stressed, was a year where Malta's core markets were strengthened.

The Malta Tourism Authority's main aim for next year, Mizzi said, was to attract the United States market and keep it in Malta's top ten markets. The NSO reported that in 2018, 50,000 inbound tourists came from the States.

"This is why we want to have the best infrastructure and high-level environments for Malta to keep going forward. In Mandragg, for example, or the three cities, the potential is enormous and we want to heavily regenerate these areas to attract more tourists," Mizzi said.

Tourism Minister Konrad Mizzi said he was happy with the tourism figures for Malta in 2018. Mizzi hopes to see Malta become a hub of world-class events.

The minister said that the government is currently conducting feasibility studies to find room for a convention centre with high-class infrastructure to encourage main events to choose Malta.

Inbound tourist trips between January and December 2018 reached 2.6 million, an increase of 14.3% over the same period in 2017.

Total tourism expenditure was estimated at €2.1 billion, 8% higher than that recorded in 2017.

Most of these travellers came to Malta via air as the National Statistics Office (NSO) reports that only 47,005 tourists came to Malta in 2018 by sea. A further 35,229 were overnight cruise passengers.

Most of these tourists, a total of 2.2 million came from the European market. The statistics prove that Malta is still a top holiday destination since business and professional visits were limited to just 180,279 from the total.

The statistics show that tourism has seen a growth spurt once again in 2018, both in terms of total visits and in terms of the duration of visits.

The total number of tourists who stayed in Malta for seven nights or more in 2018 was 1.3 million, an increase of 9.2% from the previous year when visits were shorter.

Tourists who have been to Malta before and have returned in 2018 amounted to 686,203. The rest were all first-time tourists.

Most of these, a total of 2.3 million, purchased rented accommodation in 2018 while just 322,812 stayed in non-rented accommodation, either in holiday homes they owned in Malta or stayed with their families.

The total nights spent by tourists in rented accommodation in 2018 amounted to 15.5 million. Most tourists came from the United Kingdom, followed by Italy.



SHAME - The Ruined Australia Hall in Pembroke, Malta – The Nurse of the Mediterranean

All wars bring with them horrifying casualties, and the Great War was one of the deadliest conflicts in human history. With it came an urgent need to

care for the wounded, and in 1915 a small island in the Mediterranean found itself perfectly positioned for that purpose. Malta became known as the “Nurse of the Mediterranean”, and by the time the Armistice sounded in 1918, around 136,000 men had been treated there.

The BBC looked into the numbers, and they’re staggering. Malta had 27 hospitals in January 1916, which cared for some 2,000 new patients each week. The record for a single day stands at a staggering 20,994 patients, who came under the care of hundreds of doctors and nurses working tirelessly to save the wounded front line troops.

It was in 1915 that Australia Hall was built at Pembroke, a town in the country’s Northern Region. As the name suggests, it was built by the Australian branch of the British Red Cross as an entertainment venue for convalescing Anzac soldiers. It’s function wasn’t merely to distract wounded soldiers as they recovered from their physical injuries. It also saw to their mental, spiritual, and emotional needs as well.

The entertainment hall was officially opened on January 16, 1916, with enough room to accommodate 2,000 people for stage productions, dances and other events. A library and reading room were later added, and after the war, in 1921, a projector was installed so that the venue could be used as a cinema. Providing soldiers with light-hearted entertainment was a big part of the care that Malta offered. Even after World War 1 drew to a close, Australia Hall remained a major entertainment centre until British forces left the island in 1979.

But the years that followed were not so kind on the historic structure. Having passed into Maltese government ownership, the historic building was closed and became increasingly neglected. It was eventually gutted by fire in 1998, just two years after being formally recognised as a Grade 2 National Monument.

The derelict, fire-ravaged Australia Hall was controversially sold in 2014 into private hands, This Maltese journal on several occasions was pushing for the century-old venue’s restoration. With only walls remaining, renovation would cost millions of euros and require in-depth planning. But as an important part of Australia’s national heritage, many are hopeful that a solution can be found.



**The Ruined Australia Hall in Pembroke, Malta
SAVE THE HALL
CAMPAIGN**

Please, help our campaign to preserve this ANZAC historical monument of World War One. Send us your comments of support. Heritage groups and Maltese,

Australian and N.Z Governments should

unite for sooner rather than later to save the nation's war memorial – AUSTRALIA HALL IN MALTA. If you care about this important issue and want to help send us a comment of support!!!! SO FAR WE RECEIVED OVER 900 LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Te fit-Tazza

It all started with a simple concept – that of intertwining fresh design with high-quality, Maltese-inspired prints.



ts.



Te fit-Tazza was founded in 2015 by Andrew Farrugia & Craig Macdonald, two bosom buddies with a penchant for design and all things beautiful.

Working within the travel industry over the past five years, Andrew nurtured a deep appreciation for various subliminal features, relatively unnoticeable to the average eye. Add the fact that our islands are graced with so many hidden gems and hey presto – the perfect potpourri was there for the taking.

Craig's interest in design started early on in his teens when he first discovered street art and illustration. This would serve him well while developing a successful career in advertising and marketing – a passionate crusade (labour of love) that flowered into his latest project - Te fit-Tazza, a project that typifies his passion for design and all the things that define Malta and its dependencies.

The Maltese islands boast a wealth of identity, evident to the eye in how we act and we interact and, to an extent, how we present ourselves both socially and visually. It would be fair to state that this abundance of distinction may be rooted in a strong sense of tradition, pride and patriotism. For our first series, our aim is to capture and document these attributes in the form of minimalist depictions. Taking away as much detail from our subjects as is possible, whilst keeping the subject instantly recognisable.

Our Vision

Our prospects for the future involve having these prints showcased in beautiful spaces around the world, highlighting the beauty of our islands through a subtle and modern approach. We hope you will love our first collections as much as we enjoyed spending countless nights burning the midnight oil to bring them to you.

Our Promise to You

Our products are designed and crafted to compliment all styles. The print quality is one that will stand tall even in the most luxurious of settings. We promise to deliver delightful customer service consistently above all expectations. Our prices will always be accessible as our dream is to have our art touch as many people as we can.

Why Te fit-Tazza?

When looking for a name for this project we knew we wanted something unique to Malta but also fun enough to represent two passionate friends with a complementing sense of humour.

We embarked on a mission to visit local landmarks for inspiration and it was at the Vilhena Band Club in Floriana that we got served two teas in a glass that we felt we struck gold. What's more local than a glass of tea paired with one or two cheesecakes (pastizzi). The name felt right immediately, it's fun, it's unique, it's Maltese and we simply loved it!

www.tefittazza.com

You Will Be Able to Drive Through A Flyover in Marsa in Just A Few Months' Time

Game-changing Marsa flyover project takes a huge step forward

Tim Diacono - lovinmalta.com



The ambitious Marsa flyover project is starting to take shape and drivers will get to experience it for the first time in just a few months.

Transport Minister Ian Borg announced today that the construction of the first two of the seven flyover structures, connecting Triq Giuseppe Garibaldi to Triq Aldo Moro, has officially commenced and

will be completed by the end of summer.

“This is the largest investment on any single artery in the Maltese road network and will forever transform the way the country looks at road infrastructure,” Borg said.

“This development will eliminate traffic light waiting times and related congestion emissions for over 100,000 road users who travel through this junction every day. This is a project which has been long awaited by the thousands of residents and workers who everyday need to travel to and from the south, and who for years suffered from unbearable traffic congestion and poor air quality.”

“Our country could never continue functioning with an infrastructure which is not coherent to our times and in relation to the demands of our times. An appropriate infrastructure is essential for our country to continue progressing. Less time in traffic quantifies into economic gain for the individual, companies and families.”

Contractors are currently excavating and casting the first clusters of over 460 concrete and steel piles requires to support the seven flyovers' 42 pillars. These columns will in turn support 350 horizontal beams, ranging from 25 to 35 metres long, to form the flyover structure.

The project will also involve the installation of 13.5km of underground water, sewage, storm water, electricity, internet and other telecommunications underground networks.

It will also include 1.6km of new footpaths and bicycle lanes, three pedestrian bridges, new bus lanes, four new bus lay-bys, a 380-space park and ride facility and 250 new street lamps.



'I write as I speak'

Singer-songwriter **Corazon Mizzi** needs no introduction; not only has she won *L-Għanja tal-Poplu* no less than four times with her own compositions, but she has released two albums, the latter, *Għall-Bejgħ*, launched just recently via a magnificent concert held at the University of Malta. **Anna Marie Galea** sits down with Corazon and learns more about the bubbly and ultra-talented singer and her creative process.

Like many gifted singers, Corazon's passion for music started extremely early and she is nothing if not grateful to her parents for her early introduction to what she calls "beautiful Italian music".

Corazon Mizzi. Photo: JJ Chircop

"From a very tender age, I was taught to appreciate the power of words and storytelling in song. I wrote my first proper songs during my sixth form years. The music room at St Aloysius' College contained a very beautiful grand piano, and that's where I would spend all my break-time; sometimes alone writing music, at other times in company sharing my compositions with my friends.

"They would always gladly listen in, pooling in ideas and sometimes we'd also write songs together – I knew then that this was something I loved doing and their approval really encouraged me. At the end of the year, I had produced so many songs that my Systems of Knowledge project was a collection of them." Although her first foray into songwriting when she was very young was in Italian, Corazon quickly switched to writing in Maltese. Although it was a natural process for her to write in her mother tongue, many might consider this to be something of a bold move given how few of our fellow countrymen opt to do the same. I asked Corazon why she thought that was: "I think that the first problem is that we lack an indigenous scene of Maltese music. Most of our musical past relies on songs which were written for one festival or another, tied to a political theme, or historical episode. Therefore, a young singer-songwriter wishing to write in Maltese has few idols to follow, little thematic ideas to draw inspiration from, and a repertoire which belongs to an older generation.

Despite the enormous beauty of her body of work, Corazon remains humble and grounded in what she wants to achieve both through the album and in her life in general. Her wish is not only to encourage more people to experiment with writing in Maltese but to be able to express herself fully: "Throughout my life, I always felt a strong need to realise myself as an artist – not simply to produce or to execute the already established, but to break boundaries, tread on uncharted territory and create something new.



Inti sabiha, o Malta taghna
Mhux ghax Malti nfahrek jien
Issemmik id-dinja kollha
Mgharuf gmielek kullimkien