

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER



The journal of the Maltese Diaspora



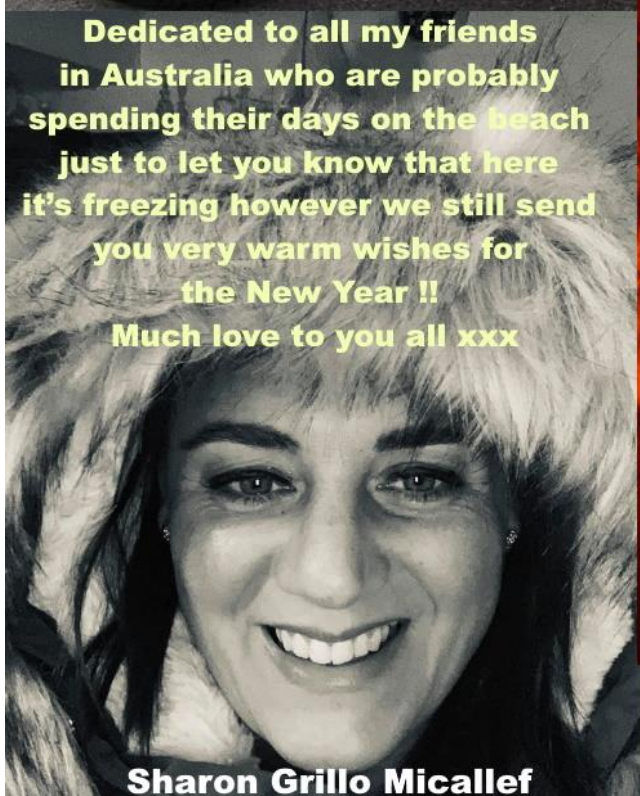
Editor: Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR

Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com



**Peter Borg from Adelaide
with his pride and joy**

**Dedicated to all my friends
in Australia who are probably
spending their days on the beach
just to let you know that here
it's freezing however we still send
you very warm wishes for
the New Year !!
Much love to you all xxx**



Sharon Grillo Micallef



Bushfires burn

**BUSHFIRES BURN
ACROSS AUSTRALIA**

**The Journal of Maltese living
in Malta and Abroad**



Maltese Cardinal Prospero Grech's funeral at the Vatican

The Vatican paid its last respects to Cardinal Prospero Grech where a Mass was said at St Peter's Basilica before his coffin brought to Malta for burial.

The funeral was celebrated by the Deputy Dean of the college of cardinals, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, with Malta represented by President George Vella, Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna and Bishop Mario Grech. At the end of the celebration, Pope Francisco incensed and blessed the coffin.

In his homily, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re said that Cardinal Grech always made God a priority. He said that Cardinal Grech was a religious man, of deep spirituality, a man who loved the Church and religious life. He said that until last Monday, Cardinal Prospero Grech had lunch among the Augustinian community in Rome, recounting stories in his affable manner, and just a few hours later, God called him to go and join him. He said that although he was 94 years old, it was a sudden death, which he was definitely prepared for.

Cardinal Battista Re said that central to Cardinal Prospero's life was the learning and teaching of theology, first in Malta and then at universities in England and Rome. He went on to say that apart from a life dedicated to studying and teaching, Cardinal Prospero Grech always found time for pastoral work at the Chapel of Santa Monica in Rome, including hearing confession.

Pope Francis presided over the last part of the funeral rites by incensing the coffin and saying the final prayers including the benediction. Before the funeral, at the International College of Santa Monica which, in the hours before, was exposed to the public, the Vatican official carried out what is called "Rogito", which means notifying and recording the closing of the coffin in an official document, a rite carried out on the death of every cardinal.

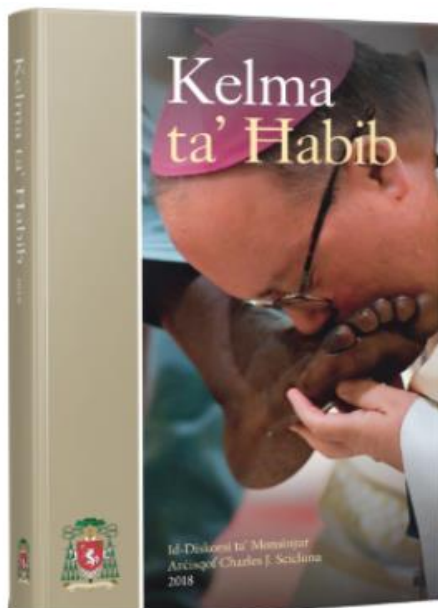
With the death of Cardinal Prospero Grech, the College of Cardinals now has 223 cardinals, 124 of them eligible to vote to elect a new Pope and 99 other non-voters, (over the age of 80), as was Cardinal Grech.

Still, Cardinal Grech had a connection with two conclaves. In the last conclave, in 2013, he was chosen to lead the meditation the cardinal electors before they elected Pope Francis. Interesting to note is that the Cardinal Prospero Grech heard the last confession of the Cardinal of Milan, Giovanni Battista Montini, in June 1963, before he was elected Pope Paul the Sixth.

At the funeral, the Maltese state was represented by President of Malta, George Vella and Ms. Vella. Also in attendance were Minister for Foreign Affairs Carmelo Abela who represented the Government, and the Malta Ambassador to the Vatican City State, Frank Zammit. Among the concelebrants were Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna, Bishop Mario Grech, the Prior General of the Augustinian Order Fr. Alejandro Moral Anton and the Provincial of the Maltese Augustinian Province, Fr Leslie Gatt.

The Maltese Augustinian Province is undergoing preparations so that in the coming days, the mortal remains of Cardinal Grech be brought Malta with a view to a Mass presente cadavere before burial.

Keeping Maltese Communities Connected



The Archbishop of Malta Mgr Charles J Scicluna presenting a copy of his new publication "Kelma ta Habib" to His Excellency Dr. George Vella, President of Malta



IT-TNEDIJA TAR-RABA' VOLUM TA' 'KELMA TA' HABIB'

ID-DISKORSI TAL-ARĊISQOF CHARLES J. SCICLUNA

Il-ġid komuni u l-ġustizzja soċjali huma żewġ temi rikorrenti fid-diskorsi tal-Arċisqof Charles J. Scicluna li ġew ippublikati fil-ktieb 'Kelma ta' Habib'. Dan il-ktieb li jinsab fir-raba' edizzjoni tiegħu jiġbor l-oġġetti, l-artikli u l-messaggi ta' Mons. Scicluna fl-2018, ir-raba' sena tiegħu bħala Arċisqof ta' Malta. L-Arċisqof ippreżenta kopja ta' dan il-ktieb lill-President George Vella u lill-awtoritajiet tal-Istat waqt l-iskambju tal-awguri tal-Milied u s-Sena l-Ġdida.

Il-ktieb juri li fl-2018 iż-żgħażaġh kienu protagonisti ewlenin fil-Knisja. Minbarra diversi attivitajiet oħra li saru lokalment, Mons. Arċisqof mexxa pellegrinagg fl-Art Imqaddsa flimkien ma' grupp ta' żgħażaġh Maltin, u attenda għas-Sinodu tal-Isqfijiet dwar 'Iż-Żgħażaġh, il-Fidi u d-Dixxerniment Vokazzjonali' li sejjah il-Papa Frangisku.

F'din ir-raba' edizzjoni tal-ktieb wieħed isib ukoll l-ordinazzjoni episkopali tal-Isqof Awżiljarju Joseph Galea-Curmi – l-ewwel ordinazzjoni ta' isqof li mexxa Mons. Scicluna – u l-pussess ta' 12-il kappillan ġdid fejn l-Arċisqof jgħalliem mhux biss dwar ir-rwol tal-kappillan iżda wkoll dwar il-bini tal-komunità fil-parroċċa.

Il-ktieb ta' aktar minn 600 paġna jinkludi 50 paġna ta' ritratti bil-kulur li ttejjdu f'diversi celebrazzjonijiet fil-parroċċi u waqt attivitajiet oħra. 'Kelma ta' Habib' fih indiċi analitiku biex il-qarrejja jsibu t-tagħlim tal-Arċisqof fuq suġġett partikulari, u għadd ta' QR (Quick Response) codes fejn bl-użu tal-ismartphone l-qarrejja jistgħu jaraw il-filmat ta' celebrazzjoni fuq YouTube. Dan il-ktieb huwa ppublikat mill-Uffiċċju Komunikazzjoni tal-Arċidjoċesi ta' Malta.

Il-ktieb 'Kelma ta' Habib' jinbiegħ għall-prezz ta' €15 u jista' jinxtara mill-Kurja tal-Arċisqof, il-Furjana; minn Emmaus f'Birkirkara u mil-Librerija Preca fil-Marsa. Il-ktieb huwa sponsorjat mill-APS Bank.

Il-ktieb huwa sponsorjat mill-APS Bank.



IMPORTANT DATES



Term 1, 2020

28 January: mainstream school resumes

1 February: Cobbitty classes start

8 February: Cringila primary class starts

13 February: Cringila adult beginners class starts

15 February: Ringrose and Rouse Hill classes start

10 April: Good Friday Procession, Horsley Park
Purċisjoni tal-Gimgha Kbira

For details or to enquire about participating in the procession, call the Our Lady Queen of Victories Parish office on 9620 1242.

12 April: Easter Sunday mass and procession of the Risen Lord, Blacktown
Quddiesa tal-Irxox

For details, call La Valette Social Centre on 9622 5847.

10 April - 26 April: school holidays



Skola Maltija Sydney

is a program of Akkademja Maltija ta' NSW Inc.

We are a not-for-profit professional organisation.

Skola Maltija Sydney is managed by a team of dedicated educators who volunteer their time and services.

If you would like to contribute, either as a sponsor or as a volunteer, please talk to one of our members.

Please back our generous business supporters who enable us to continue serving our community.

Merlin Publishers, Blata l-Bajda
www.merlinpublishers.com



Grima Bros Wholesale Produce, Gregory Hills
www.facebook.com/Grimabrotherswholesale



Campus Locations 2020

Skola Maltija Sydney has classes at Rouse Hill Public School, Ringrose Public School (Greystanes) and now at Cobbitty Public School and the George Cross Falcons Club, Cringila.

In Sydney, classes are held during school term on Saturday. In Wollongong, classes are held on Thursday (adults) and Saturday (children).

For more information please refer to our enrolment information pack. You can request a pack by sending an email to:

skolamaltijasdney@yahoo.com.au or contact:

Rouse Hill - Jane Borg	0411 478 233
Ringrose - Anna Cuschieri	0406 188 136
Cobbitty - Cynthia Villar	0419 239 193
Cringila - Annemarie Theuma	0405 126 444

Skola Maltija Sydney has been delivering Maltese language and cultural programs for 12 years. We are supported by the NSW Community Languages Schools Program (NSW Department of Education).

Our accredited teaching and learning program is designed according to the NSW Education Standards Authority *Languages K-10* syllabus.

Don't forget for your festive treats...

Call Rita Tonna: (02) 9622 8865
26 Seabrook Cres, Doonside NSW 2767
www.facebook.com/Traditional-Delights



Traditional Delights



Competitiveness Quality Not Compromised

Limestone Cafe, Schofields
www.facebook.com/limestonecafe

CB Travel Adventures, Prospect
www.facebook.com/CB-Travel-Adventures



We welcome you to follow our Facebook page to stay updated with our program activities and Maltese community events.

www.facebook.com/skolamaltijasdney



SKOLA MALTIJA - NSW

Rouse Hill, Ringrose, Cobbity, Gringila
New South Wales - Australia



Can you speak Maltese as well as Jinjing?

Chinese academic plans to teach Maltese at Beijing University



Sarah Carabott | 56

Jingjing Xu has only spent five months in Malta and can already hold a fluent conversation in Maltese.

The 30-year-old first heard of the Maltese language at the Beijing Foreign Studies University, where she teaches.

In the past, the language used to be taught at the university by Maltese lecturers. However, when Dr Xu saw that the teaching post had remained vacant over the past few years, she travelled to Malta herself.

Dr Xu plans on spending a year here as a visiting scholar at the University of Malta's Department of Maltese, before heading back to her university to teach Maltese there.

Holding a whole conversation with *Times of Malta* in Maltese, she explained that she will be the first Chinese lecturer teaching the language at the Beijing Foreign Studies University.

But why would Chinese students want to learn Maltese?

"I believe that there are Chinese people who would like to come to Malta to study and work, while there are others who are interested in learning the language of a place that has such a rich history," she said.

One of the things that gives Malta an edge over other languages is its unique way of bringing together the lexical structure and grammar of other languages, such as Arabic, English and Italian.

Asked whether she thought Maltese or Chinese was more difficult to grasp, Dr Xu said that she initially believed Maltese was really challenging. However, the Department of Maltese soon came to the rescue. Still, Dr Xu admitted that Maltese was not easy compared to other languages she has studied – such as Japanese, Italian and English. Once back in Beijing, she plans on continuing streaming and listening to Maltese radio and TV programmes, while also translate literary works.

Dr Xu finds local expressions unique to the island to be quite interesting, and believes mela is "very cute".

However, her favourite Maltese word remains dehen (roughly translated to reason, sound judgement, discernment or genius) which features in the national anthem, and sounds similar to deheb (gold).

Dr Xu, who loves the word's unique meaning, has even come up with a phrase: id-dehen jiswa mitqilu deheb, which translates to 'sound judgement is worth its own weight in gold'.

MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL OF NSW **Learn Maltese!**

A Division of the Maltese Community Council of NSW Inc.

Classes are available for students from 6 years to adults at all levels of ability in the Maltese language. We have trained and experienced teachers qualified in language teaching and with Maltese study credentials. Learn the Maltese language, the culture, lifestyle, cuisine, traditions and about the amazing history of the island.

Classes at: HORSLEY PARK - SEVEN HILLS - LUDDENHAM

For more information and enquiries Phone 0433 091 788
Or email: malteselanguageschoolnsw@hotmail.com

Supported by the Minister of Education and Training and the NSW Community Languages Schools Programme.
Member of the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools of NSW; Member of the Federation of Maltese Language Schools of Australia; Supported by 16 Maltese associations affiliated with the MCC of NSW. The Maltese Language School of NSW is a Not-For-Profit organisation.

LEARN **MALTESE**

FOR PLEASURE, WORK OR TRAVEL

BEGINNER ADULT CLASSES

**Parkville and Sunshine**

6th February 2020 Parkville
13th February 2020 Sunshine

Embrace the Maltese Culture through the
 Maltese language

WHERE: MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL VIC Inc.
 477 Royal Parade PARKVILLE
 and
 14 Watts Street SUNSHINE VICTORIA

WHEN: THURSDAY AT 6.00PM (Parkville)
 THURSDAY AT 6.30PM (Sunshine)
 Tel: 03 9387 8922 or 0412 115 919 after hours
<https://mccv.org.au/services/language/>
 Email: : admin@mccv.org.au

THUR JAN 23 - MON JAN 27 2020



*THUR JAN 23 ALTONA CITY SC V ALTONA NTH SC
 *FRI JAN 24
 GEORGE CROSS FC V GREEN GULLY SC
 LEGENDS GAME AND
 THE RIVALRY CONTINUES WITH OUR SENIORS
 *SAT JAN 25 ALTONA CITY SC V KEILOR PARK SC
 PARRAMATTA MELITA EAGLES V GREEN GULLY SC
 *SUN JAN 26 KEILOR PARK SC V ALTONA NTH SC
 PARRAMATTA MELITA EAGLES V GEORGE CROSS FC
 *MON JAN 27 FINALS



VENUE : CITY VISTA PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD
 46 CITY VISTA CCT, PLUMPTON

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 16 May 2020
Gala Night



MMG Concert Band of Victoria



LATROBE VALLEY MALTESE FESTA 2020

The Latrobe Valley Maltese Festival celebrates the food and culture of Malta – it's a taste of the Mediterranean in Morwell! The day will be filled with Maltese entertainment, exhibitions and stalls. Come and indulge in traditional Maltese food and drink and dance. The crowds will be entertained throughout the day with live music both in and outside Kernot Hall. The first Maltese Festa in 2018 attracted more than 8,000 people – make sure you save the date, this one's going to be even bigger!

Mario Sammut President Latrobe Valley Maltese Community Centre Inc and Frank Bezzina Latrobe Valley Maltese Festa 2020 Event Coordinator are happy to announce that the Commonwealth Bank Of Australia have joined the Latrobe City Council and the Latrobe Valley Authority as a major sponsor. Huss Mustafa OAM, CBA General Manager of Multicultural Community Banking and Ravi Kohli CBA, Gippsland Regional Manager visited the Latrobe Valley Maltese Community Centre to present a cheque to the Festa Committee members in the presence of Russell Northe MP, Mayor Dan Clancey Cr Graeme Middlemiss and Cr Darren Howe.. A big thank you to the Commonwealth Bank of Australia for your support.

MALTESE – SYRIAN Omar Rababah



Omar was born in Malta to a Syrian father and Maltese mother, the 28-year-old identifies as half Maltese and half Syrian, so he feels quite at home coaching the Syria Gżira FC, a team made up of people of different nationalities but one love: football.

In his spare time Omar Rababah coaches a group of international amateur footballers. He is a social worker by profession and works at the Migrant Learners' Unit. He is known for taking on Islamophobic and racist commentators and for

being quite vocal about it.

It all started when community leader Taleb Zeidan voiced his concern about how it was all work and no play for young Syrians living in Malta. Considering his cultural background and the fact that he is a footballer himself, Omar was roped in as a coach when the team was registered with the Malta Football Association.

From the very beginning, Omar wanted the team to include Maltese people as he is a firm believer in integration, not segregation. The team, which competes in the Swan league, nowadays hosts footballers from Malta and Syria, but also Nigeria, Ghana, Palestine, Somalia and Libya among others. Soon after the new team made headlines, he had to launch a livestream on Facebook to answer those who took issue with the fact that the club included African and Middle Eastern migrants. In 2020, Omar, whose own father Hashem was a Gżira United football player, intends to continue to fight social justice and human rights.



MALTESE SUB-BRANCH RSL - NSW

This Last Post Ceremony was held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra ACT to honour two heroes of the World War 1 Maltese Anzacs Privates Waldemar Beck and Charles Emanuel Bonavia. This was a very respectful and dignified service attended by members of the Sub-branch and His Excellency Charles Muscat Malta High Commissioner Lest we forget.

**Charles N. Mifsud - Hon President
Maltese Ex-servicemen Association of N.S.W.**

Photos: David Mifsud



ID-DAR TAL-PROVIDENZA – SIGGIEWI - MALTA

Non-governmental organization in Siggiewi, Malta

Address: Lapsi Street, Siggiewi SGW 2822, Malta

Hours: **Open 24 hours**

Phone: +356 2146 2844

Id-Dar tal-Providenza was founded by Mgr. Michael Azzopardi in 1965 with the aim of offering individualised residential services to Persons with Disabilities in a family-like environment which enhances and maximises their abilities with a view to ensuring their full participation in society. Today Id-Dar tal-Providenza is made up of three residences: Villa Monsinjur Gonzi, Villa Papa Giovanni and Villa Papa Luciani. It also includes four community homes, called Żerniq in Siggiewi, Akkwarell in Qawra, Dar Pirotta in Birkirkara and Shalom in Zurrieq.

At the moment, Id-Dar hosts approximately hundred and fifteen persons between the ages of fourteen and over eighty years. It also offers respite services on a regular basis to families of persons with disabilities, thus offering them support to enable the disabled family member to continue to live within their family.

A small community of Sisters of St Joan Antide Thouret popularly known as Sisters of Charity have been living and giving their service to the Home since 1968 when the Home hosted the first residents.

Some of the residents spend their day by attending activities outside the Home, namely day centres. A few others have a job within the Home or outside the Home.

These last few years id-Dar tal-Providenza has been affiliated with a foreign agency from Glasgow (Scotland) called SPRED Special Religious Development which offers a network of services designed to assist persons with intellectual disabilities to become integrated into parish assemblies of worship through the process of education in faith.

Id-Dar tal-Providenza is also affiliated with European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities which represents over 15,000 support services for Persons with Disabilities across Europe.

On the 1st October 2008, Fr Martin Micallef was appointed Director of id-Dar tal-Providenza succeeding Mgr. Lawrence Gatt who was appointed Chancellor of the Archbishops Curia.

Four and a half million euro per year are required for the running of the Homes.

Record sum collected in Festa ta' Ġenerożità 2020

A record €1,365,556 was raised during the New Year's day Festa ta' Ġenerożità organised by the Dar tal-Providenza on New Year's Day. Many people made it to Siggiewi to give donations under a big tent erected in the parking lot. Many others phoned in their donation. As has now been the custom, various parishes in Malta and Gozo had special collections during church celebrations that were donated to the Home on behalf of the community. Home director Fr Martin Micallef said this year's edition had once again shown the solidarity and generosity of the Maltese people towards the Home. The funds collected would enable it to continue to provide a better quality of life for residents in Siggiewi Home as well as in its other homes in the community. The live television broadcast started with Mass at 9am and continued till just after midnight when the total sum collected during the day was announced.



THE MALTESE OWN BAND PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY INC.

was established in 1977 with the intention of carrying on a centuries old Maltese tradition of having a community-based brass, woodwind and percussion band to play at local religious feasts and other community events.

Up to 1977, no such band existed here in Victoria and only one other in Australia. A few local Maltese

people got together and decided to establish the Society to promote the Maltese culture and play for the only Maltese style religious feast at that time, Our Lady of Victories.

In September 2017, our band celebrated its 40th anniversary, which is an achievement we are extremely proud of. On Sunday 27th January 2019, the Maltese Own Band in conjunction with the Portarlington Cricket Club, organised the Portarlington Maltese Festival which was a huge success and massive milestone for the society. Given the success achieved on this day, we are hoping to make this an Annual Event where people can come and enjoy the Maltese culture through food, music, games and festivities.

We have had many band members over the last 40 years, and we are honoured that we have remained dedicated to our original commitment to be a band for all the Maltese community. With the strong support of our players, members and supporters, we have been able to remain independent to carry on our name for future generations.

Our associations aim is to be available for all the Maltese Associations to help them celebrate their feast each year. Today, the Society plays for many well known Maltese feasts, both throughout Victoria and interstate, where possible. As well, the society also performs for many ethnic, community and cultural festivals and events playing a variety of music from traditional European style marches and hymns to popular concert pieces.

The Society currently has 30 band players but has in the past had over 120 band players at one time, as well as a subsidiary Youth Group that ran successfully for 5 years during its peak. Although the Societies members are predominantly Maltese, we have members that are from different nationalities and cultures.

Our band rehearsals are held on Wednesday evenings, 7:30pm – 9:30pm at the Maltese Cultural Centre, 27 Talmage Street Sunshine. The Society provides the band players with their instrument, if required, and their uniform at no cost to the members. The Society also provides free music lessons and tuition.

As well as the Society's aim to promote the Maltese and ethnic culture, they also encourage the youth of any ethnic background to join the Society and take advantage of the free music lessons program, (where we also supply them with an instrument,) with the aim of performing with the band. This program is not just for the youth but for anyone of any age that would like to learn to play an instrument.

Except for a small sponsorship agreement, the Societies only income is from fund raising efforts and a small fee given to the society by the religious and community groups for our performances. These funds are used for costs involved with providing and maintaining musical instruments, uniforms, teaching programs and day-to-day costs and needs of such a society. The society is a non-profit organisation with all its members working on a voluntary basis.

Contact details: Email: malteseownband@gmail.com.

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/MalteseOwnBand/>



MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE CENTRE

proudly presents

Opera and Popular Classics
Nissena Philharmonic Orchestra
(Italy)



Christine Dalli

mezzo soprano



Alexei Galea Cavallazzi
conductor



Salvatore Salvaggio
bass/baritone



Luigi Sferrazza
violin



Andriana Yordanova
soprano

Works by

*Rossini, Mozart, Donizzetti,
 Ponchielli, Massenet, Bellini,
 Tchaikovsky, Brahms,
 Schostakovich and others*

Duration: 110 min

Price 10€

Tel: 2559 5750

Tickets: www.mcc.com.mt



Republic Hall
Mediterranean Conference Centre
Valletta

Sunday
26th
Jan 2020
at 19:30

An evening of opera and popular classics

On Sunday the 26th January 2020 at 19:30 HRS, the Mediterranean Conference Centre shall be presenting a concert with the participation of the Nissena Philharmonic from Italy, the Italian bass/baritone Salvatore Salvaggio, who tours Europe and Asia regularly the Maltese mezzo soprano Christine Dalli and the Bulgarian/Maltese soprano Andriana Yordanova conducted by one of Malta's leading musicians Alexei Galea Cavallazzi.

The programme shall include some of the most popular overtures and arias from works by Rossini, Bellini, Massenet, Tchaikovsky and other composers. Ever since the Mediterranean Conference Centre started its cultural programme it can boast

not only having supported Malta's best talent but also a list of artists and performers who are world class as well as tours with orchestras from Russia, Italy, Georgia and Turkey. The MCC has also been instrumental in disseminating Maltese music and presenting Maltese artists abroad. The opera and popular classics evening is aimed at all music lovers and especially opera lovers. The programme includes works such as the overture to William Tell by Rossini and La Gazza Ladra, The Polonaise from Tchaikovsky's Onegin, arias from La Cenerentola and Don Pasquale as well as from Mozart's Don Giovanni and the famous casta Diva by Bellini. This programme is sure to be of interest to all age groups.

The concert's total duration is 110 minutes and entrance is only 10 euros. For tickets and further information call on 2559 5750 or visit www.mcc.com.mt

Il-Qarċilla Double Bill by Heritage Malta



Karl Farrugia

Heritage Malta will once again be treating its patrons to an original and unique Carnival event this year: **Il-Qarċilla** at the **Inquisitor's Palace** and the **National Museum of Natural History** in collaboration with **I-Akkademja tal-Malti**.

Il-qarċilla is a poetic farce in Maltese which up to a hundred years ago formed part of the Carnival celebrations held in Valletta and was also very popular in a number of villages. A man,

acting as a notary, would in the presence of two youngsters, acting as husband and wife-to-be, read out a marital contract in verse filled with satirical innuendos and humour. The crowd would gather in the streets of Valletta to listen to the poem which, in some instances, could require an adult audience.

The first *qarċilla* on record was written for the 1760 carnival festivities by Cospicua poet Dun Feliċ Demarco. Amongst the works of Demarco, one also finds *Iż-Żwieġ la Maltija* (Marriage the Maltese way) which is the only one of his works which survived till this day.

The first Qarċilla will take place at The Inquisitor's Palace in Vittoriosa on Monday 16th February at 8pm. The programme includes a short talk by **Olvin Vella** about the linguistic value of the ancient *qrieċel*, a performance, a small exhibition of authentic specimens of *qrieċel* and a reception. **The second run will be held at the National Museum of Natural History in Mdina on Tuesday 17th February at 8pm.** Once again the programme will include a short talk, this time by **Dr. Bernard Micallef** about the literary value of the first *qarċilla*, a performance, a small exhibition of authentic specimens of *qrieċel* and a reception. The brand new Qarċilla is written by **Trevor Zahra**. For more information about this and other similar events follow Heritage Malta on **Facebook**.



Adoration of the Magi to close Bethlehem f'Ghajnsielem on Sunday

The Adoration of the Magi will bring Bethlehem f'Ghajnsielem to a close during a special ceremony next Sunday.

This is the final chapter in the story of the Nativity, when the Three Wise Men will make their triumphant entrance at the Nativity Village – Bethlehem f'Ghajnsielem, stopping at the grotto to present gifts to baby Jesus.

Many thousands of visitors have enjoyed this 11th edition of the village since it opened earlier this month, enjoying the many features, including the grotto with Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, the vegetable and fish markets, carpenters and blacksmith, as well as a bakery.

This popular event which is free of charge, has over 200 actors taking part, on a site which is spread over 20,000 square metres in the quaint village of Ghajnsielem.

The Magi will leave on horseback from a destination in Europe – which is still to be announced – on Thursday, the 2nd of January. When they arrive in Malta they will make their way to Cirkewwa, via Mellieha, upon arrival on the ferry in Mgarr, they will ride on horseback up to Ghajnsielem and the Nativity Village for the triumphant entrance to visit the Baby Jesus.

Although the nativity village is always open, it will only be animated on the following days:

Wednesday, 1 January 3.30pm – 8.00pm

Sunday, 5 January ** 2.00pm – 8.00pm

Tile maker creates 180 different types of traditional Maltese tiles



Created individually by hand and using every shade possible, including the deep blue of the Mediterranean Sea and the poppy red of the Maltese flag, the typical Maltese tile is inspired by Turkish and Ottoman traditions.

The craftsmanship of Maltese tile-making is still alive and kicking. However, over these last few years, this typical Maltese industry sustained a blow because of

competition from tiles which are more practical, including ceramic tiles.

As a result of this, despite the colours which are so pleasing to the eye and its prestige, for a number of years the Maltese tile was not appreciated due to progress and the importation of ready-made products from foreign markets.

Among those who have fought hard to keep this traditional Maltese skill alive, is Robert Lia who between the four walls of his shop in Fgura over the years has created around 180 different designs, created to the client'

By [Baryn](http://Baryn.lovinmalta.com) lovinmalta.com

COUNTRY UNKNOWN

If you've ever been held by airport security, you'll know how scary and confusing it can be to face scrutiny from strangers in a different language. Now, imagine being held by security because they thought you were making up your country of origin...

That's exactly what happened to Maltese artist Matthew 'Muxu' Mercieca during his travels to Asia.

"Just spent an extra hour in immigration as they thought my passport was fake and I was making up the country Malta," the singer-songwriter posted on his Instagram story.

Muxu is currently in South Korea, where he headed to after leaving Vietnam yesterday morning.

The local singer-songwriter is currently travelling the globe, living a "nomadic" lifestyle on a journey of self-discovery.

"Just in case we ever feel too important," Muxu closed his post off with, referencing the island's tiny size in irony.

We're still scratching our heads as to how a security official in an airport, of all places, didn't know geography well

enough to know that Malta is in fact a real country.

Speaking to Lovin Malta, Muxu described the strange experience saying that at one point officials began "smelling and scanning every single page". "Eventually, I had to pull up Google Maps to prove it exists," he laughed in relief that the interrogation didn't take a more negative turn



Just spent an extra hour in immigration as they thought my passport was fake and I was making up the country Malta... just in case we ever feel too important 🤔



An American Game Show's New Year's Special roasts Malta

Malta's TV mentions of the decade are off to a great start... if you call being roasted for 60 straight minutes great, that is.

In the latest episode of popular US game show *Let's Make a Deal* (Season 11 Episode 59, aired on New Year's Day), our tiny islands were brought up a couple of times by beloved comedian and impromptu satirist Wayne Brady, who made fun of everything from Malta's international sport accomplishments to the national anthem.

It all started with Jenise Spiteri (which already sounds very Maltese), an excited contestant who shared her cool snowboarding past with the TV host.

"I tried to go to the last Olympics but that's when I blew my knee out and missed it by one spot, so 2022!" she explained as everyone in the studio erupted in encouraging cheers. But as Brady cheers Jenise on himself with chants of "Team USA!", this is when she corrects him with "Team Malta"... and everything goes south.

What follows is a number of jokes that ran through the entire show, from comparisons to Cool Runnings to even a cheeky prize at the end.

"My grandma had the maiden name that she married into and her mother also had the same maiden name that she married, but all of them were related, they were all different families with the same last name," Jenise explains to a visibly confused (but very entertained) Brady. "Hmm... family tree with one big old root," the hosts slyly replies.

At a point, Brady also asks the entire studio to stand for the Maltese "national anthem"... only this time, it's just three quick lines because "it's such a small country it just says 'Oh Malta, teeny tiny land'." Towards the end of the show, the host returns... this time sporting a crown and rainbow sash bearing the word MALTA.

"Over the commercial break, I was promoted and I am now the official king of Malta," he says, giving everyone the islands' "customary salute" of what looks like a facepalm (very fair, considering our 2019).

By the end of the show, one of the prizes given out was actually a trip to Malta... leading an excited Leslie to come back to the audience as the "national anthem" kicked off all over again. To know more about JENISE SPITERI read her biography below:

<https://www.facebook.com/LetsMakeADealCBS/videos/1018210931911438/>

I spent the majority of my life acting and modeling. At 4 years old I signed with my first agent and appeared in magazines, commercials, tv shows, and movies for clients including NBC, IBM, Levi's, Nike, and Macy's. I thought that acting and modeling would be my life path until I was 17 years old.

My plans made an unexpected shift when I discovered my passion for snowboarding. I moved to Lake Tahoe when I turned 18 to pursue a career as an athlete. While in Tahoe I completed my Bachelors degree in Entrepreneurship at Sierra Nevada College.

I spend the year traveling the country from mountain to mountain, to train, compete, and have fun doing what I love. In my off time I surf, skateboard, and act in Los Angeles. I compete for the country of Malta and finished one spot shy of making it into the 2018 Olympics while competing with a major knee injury. Moving forward I plan on creating content around the world and qualify for the next Olympic Games in China 2022.



American letter writer's age matches postage price... many times



“
I read The
Gozo News
article:
“Increase in
MaltaPost
postage

rates effective from next Thursday” (27 December issue, Gozo News). I was born in the year 1963, yet when I was age 6, the price of a domestic postage-stamp was 6 cents.

This parallel also happened when I was age 8, 10, 13, 15, 18, and 22 — the price of American postage was exactly that amount in United States cents (U.S. “pennies”). It also happened again when I was age 33.

Earlier in this year of 2019, postage rose to 55 cents for a domestic stamp. You guessed it, I had just turned age 55 a month earlier in December 2018. Now, just days ago (on 14 December 2019), I have just turned age 56 and there are rumblings about another possible postage increase here in America.

I love the human-touch of a hand-written postal letter. Over the years, I have joined various stamp clubs. I love letters from the United Kingdom with the silhouette of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the only Queen that has reigned in my entire lifetime. I also like to see “Knights of Malta” pictorial stamps.

Yet, fewer people are using traditional postal mail and yielding to e-mail. Plus, what few stamps are used now have the word “FOREVER” marked on them, indicating they are usable whenever a rate-hike occurs....“FOREVER” with no numeric denomination emblazoned thereon.

Personally, I like the stamps that depict good Art, especially that of distinguished humans or things. Yet, the Post Office is almost getting too pricey; even for me.

Postage stamps stick to our personalities. Yet, it is a pity that the cost keeps rising. Although still comparatively a “bargain” the “art” of writing an “old-fashioned letter” is something that younger generations of people worldwide may someday hardly experience at all.

I would much rather the cost increase be borne by the “junk-mailers” who send meaningless advertisements and flyers out in bulk.

Sadly, gone are the days of “the penny postcards” with an image of an early United States President Thomas Jefferson, or the 2-cent postcard with an image of the early statesman Benjamin Franklin, also embossed thereon.”

Sincerely, James A. Marples, Longview, Texas, U.S.A.

MALTA - Dar Merħba Bik opens its second home for victims of domestic violence

Karl Azzopardi



Dar Merħba Bik has opened its second home for victims of domestic violence.

The non-governmental organisation has been helping women and children who have experienced domestic violence since 1980.

The foundation falls under the wing of the Good Shepherd Sisters Foundation and their home has served as the main shelter for the past 40 years. On 2 December, it announced the inauguration of a secondary shelter under the name Dar Santa Bakhita, aptly named after the patron saint of victims of human trafficking.

“Over the years, Dar Merħba Bik has hosted over 3,700 different women and children who have experienced some form of domestic violence – be it emotional, physical, sexual or financial abuse,” Dar Merħba Bik’s Coordinator Jeannette Gillard told *The Malta Independent on Sunday*.

The foundation helps these individuals distance themselves from the negativity they are faced with

at home by providing them with a sheltered home that caters for their needs on both a material and psychological level.

By working in close quarters with the Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) of government agency Appogg, the foundation ensures that the people it hosts are getting help from all aspects. Immediate help is still given to any urgent calls they receive, but Dar Merħba Bik later refers them to the DVU to ensure that they have a social worker catering for them. This also ensures that each case has gone through the risk assessment process that confirms its genuineness.

Dar Merħba Bik hosts around 14 women and children who get their own small apartment with a kitchen and bathroom, separate from the shared kitchen and living area. "The general rule is to keep the clients for a maximum of six months; but we don't work with machines; we work with humans, so it depends on the client. If people in our shelter would still be in danger, obviously they will not be asked to leave... Some clients find it difficult to return to their day-to-day lives due to the rent situation, for example. People were getting stuck and wanting to move forward but not being able to because they were out of danger, but they still had financial issues," Gillard said.

This is where Dar Santa Bakhita comes into play. This shelter will be available for three families who have been in a domestic violence shelter and here they can work on their skills, save money and experience a smoother transition back to a normal life.

When asked if there has been an increase in people who seek their help, Gillard stated that Dar Merħba Bik has consistently hosted 100 clients a year but referrals of people who seek assistance have increased. "We have seen a rise in sexual abuse, marital rape, human trafficking that leads to domestic violence and also child and parent violence – for example elder women who are being abused by their adult children."

She also noted that, despite physical abuse still being a predominant cause for women seeking help, there has been a rise in psychological abuse, which is much harder to identify and overcome.

This can have devastating effects on the victim, making them lose their sense of self-worth, Gillard said. Having written her dissertation of domestic violence, she came to realise that there is a misconception about the victims as being weak, domestic women. In reality, most of them are incredible women who are dragged into this precarious situation without even realising.

"It's heartbreaking to watch someone who you know is able to change their lives, but they've been told that they couldn't for so long that they started to believe it. Fortunately, when they start understanding their worth, they start to flourish. It is very fulfilling and gratifying to see them leave the shelter with a new sense of self-worth and confidence."

This is done with the help of the social workers and caretakers present within each home who cater for every client depending on their requirements. During her time at the home, Gillard discovered that by just having people who listen and respect them, their clients are able to move forward more easily. "Improvement is incredible when someone knows they are cared for and listened to as the humans that they are."

Gillard also mentioned that, being an NGO, the foundation is lucky to have many benefactors who help in any way they can. This includes any volunteers who call in to facilitate any in-house activities or any outside fundraising events such as their annual bazaar and busking session, which took place in Valletta last Tuesday. Dav.Jr, one of the masterminds behind the busking sessions and also one of the performers, told The Malta Independent that the amount of money they get from this event has been doubled with each year, reaching a record of €1,168 this year. Such funds have always been important in the maintenance of Dar Merħba Bik, especially now that they are opening a secondary shelter.

We urge you to support the hard work of those involved in Dar Merħba Bik by simply sending a donation through Revolut on +35679217126 or by attending any of the foundation events they host which you can stay updated on by following their Facebook page

**MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**

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We belong to the same global village

**Building Bridges between us and
linking Maltese all over the world**

Catholics and Muslims congregate to bring joy to those who are alone at Christmas

Report: Liam Carter www.tvm.com.au

For some, the Christmas holidays and festivities are a respite from loneliness and to take part in socializing activities and initiatives specially organised for them. One of these activities was a dinner organized by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Association in conjunction with the Granparents' Association for the elderly living alone.

At the Holy Family Centre in Msida a hundred people, ordinarily on their own, came together to enjoy a traditional meal prepared by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Malta.

The Imam and the President of the Ahmadiyya Community Atif Ahmed, said that during this festive period, the need was felt to organize this meal for senior citizens and grandparents who suffer from loneliness.

"The nicest thing is to celebrate these moments with others because ultimately humanity is the common denominator and we love the community with all our heart."

The Ahmadiyya community volunteers prepared a traditional Asian meal that included rice with chicken and beef, fresh vegetables and traditional desserts.

Talking to Television Malta he said that the food itself was not important and the most significant thing was the love and respect that are the foundation of this initiative.

Philip Chircop President and founder of the Grandparents' Association welcomed the initiative while the Imam said that Association focused its efforts on the scourge of loneliness. He said that this meal helped to expose the different cultures and beliefs on the islands.

"Reducing any kind of racism that could exist. The fact that we can work together with our ideologies of tolerance and solidarity which are our Catholic values and bring joy to hundreds of



people that find themselves alone in these times of joy.'

The Ahmadiyya movement began in India in 1889 and today is spread around many countries within Muslim communities, who believe that the prophet Muhammed has already come and made several reforms.



Malta sets off a new decade with fireworks and 3D displays

Thousands of people welcome 2020 in Valletta

Malta has welcomed in 2020 with fireworks and music as thousands of people celebrated in Valletta. Music from artists the Travellers, Kevin Paul, Gaia Cauchi and Kurt Calleja heralded the new decade. A series of 3D projections were emblazoned across the Presidential Palace and a fireworks display helped revellers count down the new year.

Film Malti jagħmel hoss fil-Kanada

Serbut twil ta' nies u teatru mimli daqs bajda f'Toronto, il-Kanada jistenna sabiex jara l-film Malti "Hemm Dar il-Qala".

Dan huwa l-ewwel film Malti tal-generu ta' drama tal-waħx ta' din ix-xorta li pparteċipa f'festival prestiġjuż bl-isem ta' tal-Festival tal-Films tal-Unjoni Ewropea f'Toronto.

Din kienet il-ħmistax -il edizzjoni u r-raba' sena li pajjiżna pparteċipa f'dan il-festival li sar f'Novembru li għadda. B'kollox intwerew mat-tmienja u għoxrin film minn pajjiżi Ewropej ġewwa "The Royal Theatre" li jinsab fil-qalba ta' Toronto.

Dan l-istazzjon Itaqa' ma' wieħed mill-aktar diretturi u produttur rinomat tal-films f'pajjiżna Mark Doneo li kiteb, idderieġa u pproduċa dan il-film, b'Lawrence Buontempo, Louise Doneo u Mark Doneo stess bħala l-atturi prinċipali.

"Għaliġa xi ħaġa li taffaxinani ħafna li nżomm il-lingwa tiegħi tibqa' ddur siegħa f'dijaspora tagħna fejn hemm Maltin hemm barra u siegħa f'postijiet fejn m'hemmx Maltin nuru lil barranin il-kultura u l-lingwa tagħna li jiena kburi u happy ħafna biha." Stqarr Mark Doneo, id-Direttur tal-film.

Doneo semma wkoll l-ħidma u l-għajnuna minn diversi entitajiet bħal fond Malti tal-Films, il-Kunsill Malti għall-Arti u l-Kummissjoni Maltija tal-Films.

"Jekk ħa tippreżenta xogħlok b'mod internazzjonali trid turi ċertu professjonalità. Importanti dik, mingħajrha sfortunatament kollox jibqa' jsir, il-ħajja tibqa' għaddejja pero



biex jintlaħaq ċertu livell bilfors trid intervent finanzjarju." Kompla jgħid Doneo.

Il-film ntlaqa' tajjeb minn fost dawk li li rawh, inkluz diversi bosta Maltin-Kanadiżi li jgħixu f'Toronto. Uħud minnhom saħansitra saqu u qabdu ajruplan minn żoni mbiegħda fil-Kanada speċifikament biex jaraw dan il-film Malti.

Il-Konslu Ġenerali ta' Malta għall-Kanada, Dr Raymond Xerri ntroduċa dan il-film lill-udjenza fejn sostna li din hija ċelebrazzjoni tal-kultura u l-arti Maltija f'belt illi tiżboq lill-Amerika fejn tidhol l-arti.

"Mill-kummenti tan-nies tara l-apprezzament l-ewwel ħaġa li l-gvern Malti għen biex xi ħaġa bħal din issir kif ukoll kumpanija bħal ta' Mark Doneo li pproduċiet film ta' dik il-kwalita' u jimpurtaha illi turih id-dijasporu tagħna." Ikkonkluda l-Konslu Malti, Raymond Xerri.

Il-Ministru għall-Affarijiet Barranin Carmelo Abela tenna li f'dawn l-aħħar snin l-industrija tal-films f'pajjiżna qed timraħ u l-livell u l-professjonalità li qed juru l-produttori Maltin qed tħabbatha bis-serjetà ma' ta' barra.

Abela tenna wkoll li għandna nkunu kreattivi fil-mod li bih nippreżentaw il-produzzjonijiet tagħna.

Huwa awgura li l-film ta' siegħa u kwart ta' Mark Doneo jkompli jintlaqa' b'mod tajjeb hekk kif issa mistenni jintwera f'Vancouver, belt iehor kbira fil-Kanada.



Gozitan Horror: Why I Filmed The Movie Fully In Maltese

By [Tim Diacono](#)

Ahead of the upcoming premiere of the much-anticipated ghost horror film *The Weeping House of Qala*, director Mark Doneo has played down concerns that his decision to film it entirely in Maltese will harm its appeal.

"Many people have asked us why we filmed it in Maltese and not in English so as to perhaps give it more of an international appeal," Doneo said. "Amazingly, the people who ask me these questions tend to be Maltese."

He said it has always been his childhood dream to direct films in Maltese, having watched foreign films in several languages and wondering what they would look and sound like if they were in Maltese.

"If the story is about Maltese people living in Malta and walking the streets of Malta, does it make sense for them to speak in English just for the sake of giving it a wider international appeal?" he asked. "I never liked this idea, and [filming it in Maltese] actually makes more sense for a small independent film like ours. After all, we've all seen films in Persian, Spanish, Italian, right?"

The Weeping House of Qala follows a Maltese documentary crew who spend a day at an abandoned house in the Gozitan village of Qala in the hope of solving the mystery of why a woman and her three children had disappeared there four decades ago.

It stars Doneo himself, his wife Louise Doneo and his nephew Darien Doneo, as well as Lawrence Buontempo, Lindsey Brinciau and Ryan Paul Mercieca.

It is currently being shown at international film festivals, including at the Cinefantasy festival in Brazil, and it was shown in Malta at the Eden Century Cinema on 20th September.



The Continent of Australia on fire

Queensland, NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania

Thousands of holidaymakers and locals were forced to flee to beaches in fire-ravaged southeast Australia Tuesday, as blazes ripped through popular tourist areas leaving no escape by land.

Four thousand people were trapped on the foreshore of the town of Mallacoota and many others sought refuge on beaches in fire-encircled seaside towns up and down a 200-kilometre strip of coast.

Some residents with boats even took to the sea, hoping for refuge from one the worst days yet in Australia's months-long bushfire crisis.

Dozens of properties were feared to have been destroyed since late Monday and at least seven people were unaccounted for in New South Wales and Victoria states as flames reached well-populated towns like Batemans Bay.

In some places the blazes were so intense, the smoke so thick and the fire-provoked dry lightning storms so severe that aerial reconnaissance and waterbombing had to be halted, the New South Wales Rural Fire Service said.

In Mallacoota, smoke turned day to night and the authorities said nearby fires were causing extreme thunderstorms and "ember attacks".

"We've got a fire that looks like it's about to impact on Mallacoota," Victoria's Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp told public broadcaster ABC, adding that firefighters had been deployed to protect the group.



Authorities had for days been warning tens of thousands of tourists enjoying Australia's summer holidays to leave the area but for thousands it was now too late to leave.

"We've got three strike teams in Mallacoota that will be looking after 4,000 people down on the beach there," Crisp said. "We're naturally very concerned about communities that have become isolated."

Preparations were reportedly under way for an evacuation by sea or air if needed.

On social media, residents said they fled on boat or were putting on life jackets in case they need to seek refuge from the fire in the water.

Temperatures in bushfire areas can hit hundreds of degrees Celsius killing anyone nearby long before the flames reach them.

Fleeing into the ocean is a "last resort option" according to Victoria's emergency management agency.

Local radio journalist Francesca Winterson said she was watching the fire approach the town and her own home while she tried to broadcast emergency warnings amid a powercut.

"I'd rather be alive than have a house," she told ABC Gippsland.

Australia's unprecedented bushfires have been burning for months, but the latest in a series of heatwaves and high winds have wrought new devastation.

The crisis has hit cities like Sydney and Melbourne, home to several million people.

On Monday, around 100,000 people were urged to flee five Melbourne suburbs as the spiralling bushfire crisis killed a volunteer firefighter battling a separate blaze in the countryside.

Authorities in the country's second-biggest city downgraded an earlier bushfire emergency warning but said residents should steer clear of the blaze, which has burned through 40 hectares of grassland.

Local media showed images of water bombers flying over neighbourhoods, and families hosing down their homes in the hope of halting the fire's spread.

A volunteer firefighter died in New South Wales state and two others suffered burns while working on a blaze more than five hours southwest of Sydney, the Rural Fire Service said.

"It's believed that the truck rolled when hit by extreme winds," the agency said, adding that the man left behind a pregnant wife.

Ten others, including two volunteer firefighters, have been killed so far this fire season.

The blazes have destroyed more than 1,000 homes and scorched more than three million hectares - an area bigger than Belgium.

The mercury reached 47 degrees Celsius in Western Australia and topped 40 degrees in every region - including the usually temperate island of Tasmania.

The crisis has focused attention on climate change - which scientists say is creating a longer and more intense bushfire season - and sparked street protests calling for immediate action to tackle global warming.

While conservative Prime Minister Scott Morrison belatedly acknowledged a link between the fires and climate change, he has continued his staunch support of Australia's lucrative coal mining industry and ruled out further action to reduce emissions.

Sydney was again shrouded in toxic bushfire haze Tuesday. City officials said Sydney's New Year's Eve fireworks would go ahead, but a similar event has been cancelled in Canberra and several regional towns.

Maltese e-Newsletter



The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



www.facebook.com/frank.scicluna.3



Minister Carmelo Abela met with Maltese Diaspora in Toronto, Canada. SEPTEMBER 2019

Minister Abela said that although living overseas for so long, their love and pride for Malta not only remains strong but is transmitted to younger generations.



ISPI #MED2019

MEETING
ROME 2019
MED
MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUES



“

WE NEED TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE FROM A BROAD PERSPECTIVE. WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER, NO COUNTRY ON EARTH CAN SOLVE THIS PROBLEM ALONE.

CARMELO ABELA

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MALTA

Climate Change and global warming, the difference refer to closely related effects, and some people use the terms interchangeably. Global warming is the cause of climates change. “Global warming” refers directly and solely to the rising global temperatures, while “climate change” includes other kinds of changes, too.

Warmer global temperatures lead to climate change affecting rainfall patterns, humidity sea level, temperature patterns and the probability of extreme climatic events.

The flu pandemic which left 1,000 victims in Malta



The first case of Spanish flu had been reported in Malta 100 years ago. It was a pandemic which accounted for 1,000 victims in Malta. Two Canadian anthropologists who have been researching Spanish flu for several years, have discovered that Gozo had a much higher rate of cases and deaths than Malta. They also managed to identify the route followed by the pandemic from Grand Harbour to the centre of the island.

100 years ago the influenza pandemic known as Spanish flu had taken the world by surprise. The pandemic had

accounted, on its own, for 100 million deaths, five percent of the world's population.

The pandemic also reached Malta, with the first definite case reported in May of 1918... a hundred years ago. 16,000 cases were reported over a twelve-month period, but the influenza probably effected some 50,000 persons. The death toll reached one thousand, one in ten of which were recorded in Gozo. Canadian anthropologist Larry Sawchuk explained why the immunity level in Gozo could have been lower than in Malta.

Professor Sawchuk, from Toronto University, said that "Gozo is a little bit more isolated, and by virtue of being more isolated, they may have not been exposed to the flu in previous encounters."

As opposed to pandemics of other influenzas, the most effected age groups in Malta were adults in the 20 to 40 age group, and mainly women who would have become infected from their children.

Prof. Liann Tripp from Northern Columbia University stated that "caring for maybe quite a few children at a time, and maybe their nutritional status wasn't the best. Lack of sleep and nutrition can put you at risk. A combination of those factors put women more at risk."

Both anthropologists maintain that the railway service at the time, from Valletta to Hamrun, Birkirkara, Attard and Rabat, was the major factor for spreading the flu



ORDER OF MALTA Grand Master's
GRAND MAGISTRY

**Christmas
Greetings at St.**

John Baptist Hospital in Rome

For the Christmas festivities, Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, accompanied by Grand Hospitaller Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel and by Fra' Roberto Viazzo, member of the Sovereign Council, visited St. John Baptist Hospital, the long-term care facility run by the Order of Malta's Italian Association in Rome. The Grand Master's visit started with mass celebrated by Cardinal Angelo Becciu, the Pope's Special Delegate to the Order of Malta. After mass, the Granatieri di Sardegna band gave a concert for the hospital patients. Accompanied by the President of the Italian Association Riccardo Paternò, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre then did a round of the wards to express his greetings and gratitude to the medical staff and to give words of encouragement and solidarity to the patients and their families.

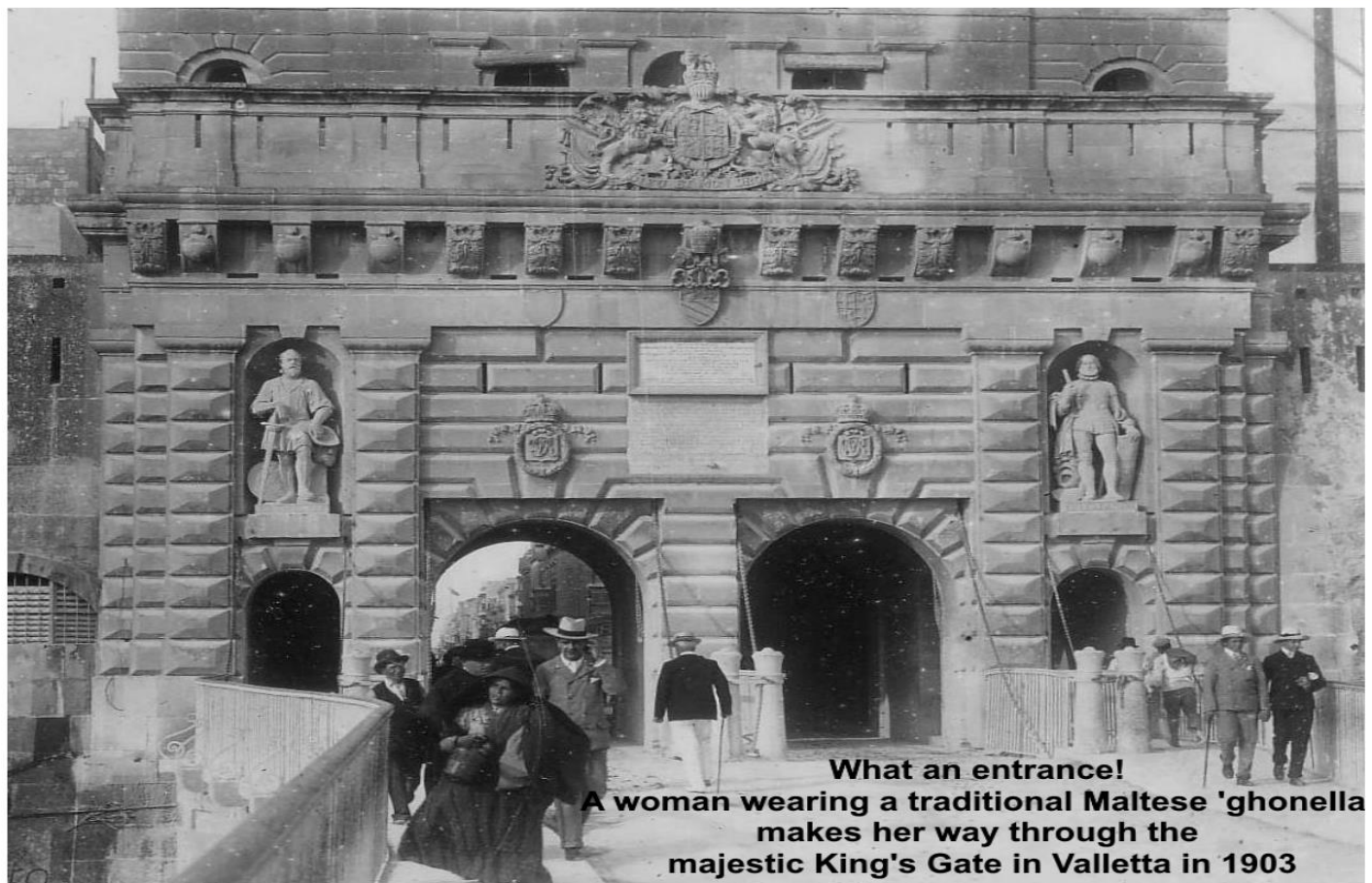
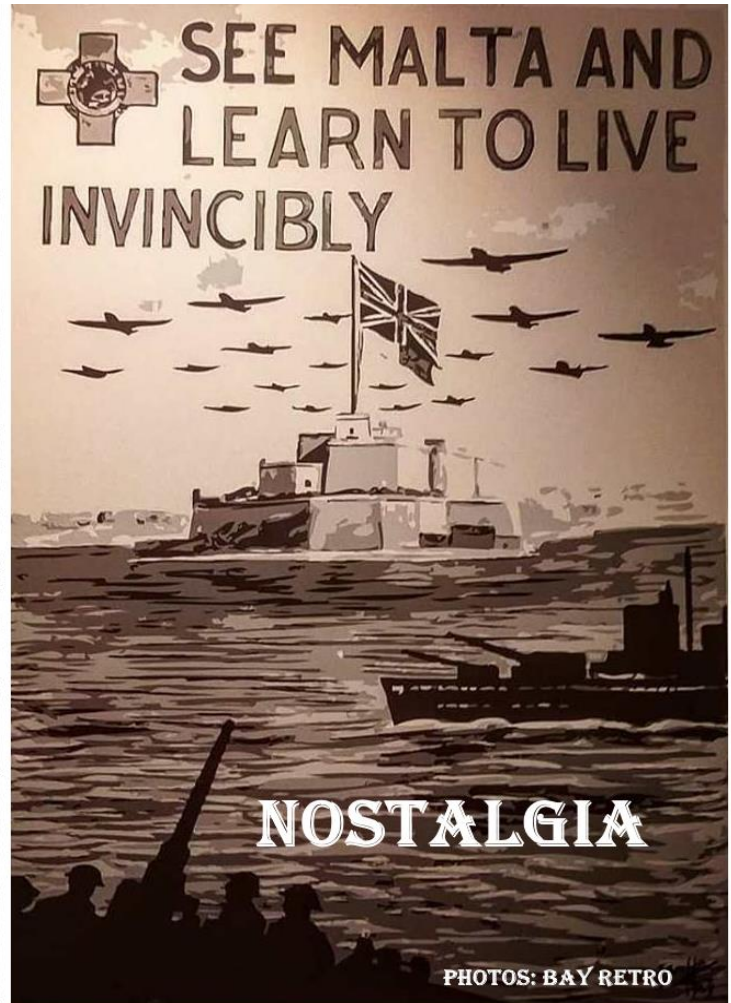
St. John Baptist hospital is specialised in neuromotor rehabilitation and has recently inaugurated a new day hospital inside the facility. With this visit to the Roman hospital, the Grand Master wanted to become closer symbolically to all the people the Order of Malta assists worldwide, thanks to the industriousness of its members, health personnel and volunteers.



Children smile for the camera in a bombed out building in Valletta during the darkest days of the war in 1942



Traditional lace-making captured at Xlendi in Gozo in 1967





Maltese Companies short-listed for the European Business Awards held in Warsaw, Poland

The Ambassador of Malta to Poland, Dr. John Paul Grech joined the CEOs, founders or managing directors of nine Maltese companies which were short-listed as finalists for the European Business Awards 2019 – Europe's most prestigious business awards programme - during a Gala Ceremony which was held at the Hilton Warsaw Hotel and Convention Centre, Warsaw, Poland.

The short-listed national winners from

Malta, selected from over 150,000 companies all across Europe, were the following:

- AquaBio Tech Group - specialising in Aquaculture and Marine Research.
- BRND WGN - specialising in Marketing.
- CasaSoft Ltd and KnowMeNow - both specialising in IT technology.
- OZO Group of Companies Ltd - specializing in the Services industry.
- QGen Group Ltd. - specialising in Financial Services.
- QLZH Group - specializing in Construction & Property.
- RS2 Software p.l.c. - specializing in Information and Communication.
- STM Malta - specializing in Financial Services.

Ambassador Grech expressed his appreciation for the fact these companies managed to be short-listed as National Winners for Malta, an achievement reflecting the extraordinary overall effort each of them was investing in constantly raising the standards of their respective enterprises.

During his exchanges, Ambassador Grech confessed how impressed he was with their enthusiasm and commitment to overcome the challenges which the day-to-day business reality can come up with. He reiterated that it was crucial that such enthusiasm is maintained, coupled with a tenacity to always aim higher and achieve more.

Ambassador Grech emphasized how important the promotion of trade and commerce in the international political agenda of government has become. He further underscored that during these last few years Malta has sought to further strengthen its foreign trade policy enough to render it to become one of its main foreign policy objectives. This, he confirmed, is one of the key messages which the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion has been constantly sharing with local enterprises and foreign investors alike.

The organizers had words of praise for the level of commitment, vision and standards which all short-listed companies, including Maltese companies, demonstrated during the rigorous panel reviews which took place in Warsaw with each of the companies present for the finals.

Representatives of Maltese companies commented on how useful such experiences are for them to be able to network with some of the best small and medium sized enterprises excel in their area of expertise to the extent of being short-listed for such European-wide awards.

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