

JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER



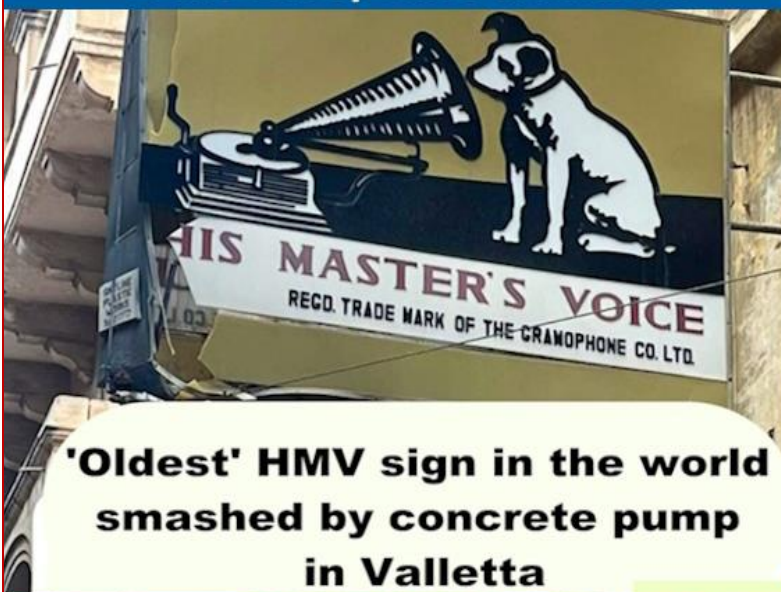
Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP

maltesejournal@gmail.com

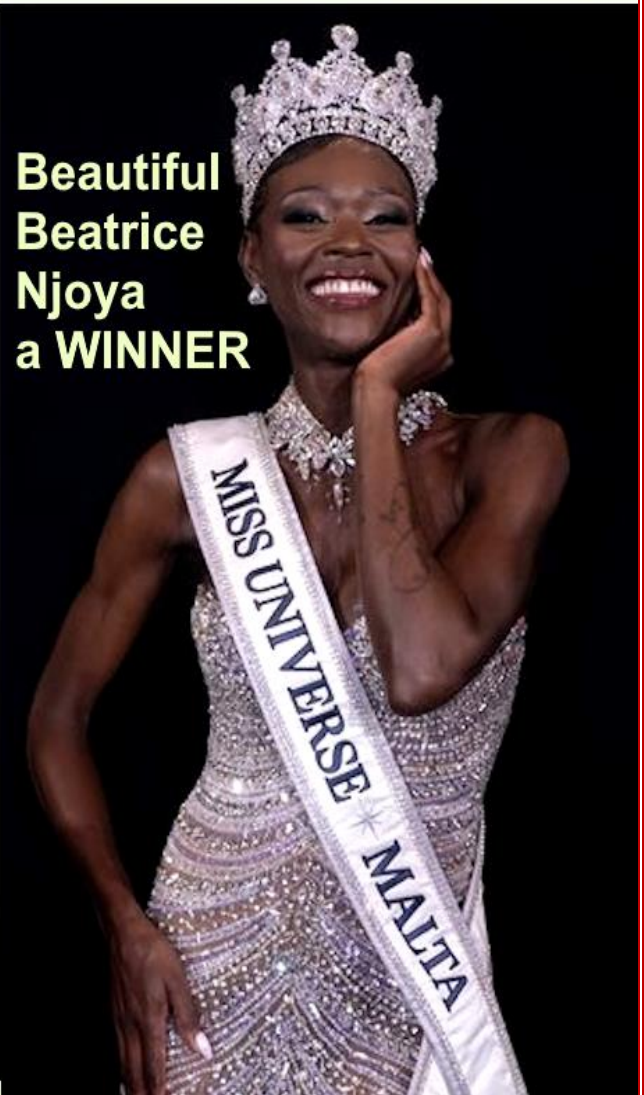


PROUD
TO BE
MALTESE

**Roberta Metsola re-elected President
of the European Parliament**



**'Oldest' HMV sign in the world
smashed by concrete pump
in Valletta**



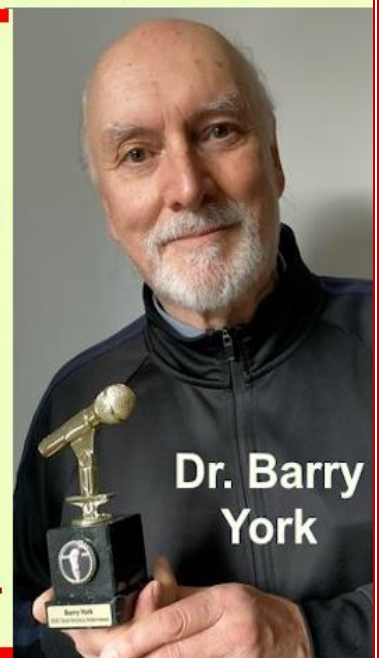
**Beautiful
Beatrice
Njoya
a WINNER**

**Miriam Gauci
Gaulitana**



**WE
KEEP
MALTESE
LIVING
ABROAD
ON THE
MAP**

**I NEED
YOUR
SUPPORT**



**Dr. Barry
York**



President backs National Archives' plea for new site

Ta' Qali site transferred in 2019 was taken back to become car park

John Paul Cordina -

National archivist Charles Farrugia and president Myriam Spiteri Debono during the latter's visit to the National Archives' Rabat headquarters. Photo: OPR

President Myriam Spiteri Debono has publicly appealed to the authorities to identify a suitable and

adequate site that would accommodate the National Archives, in the wake of revelations that the government's pledge to develop new premises in Ta' Qali was unceremoniously broken.

The National Archives had been promised the new premises in Ta' Qali, and two ministers and a parliamentary secretary – Evarist Bartolo, Ian Borg and Chris Agius – were present when the deed transferring the land to the National Archives was signed in 2019.

But as national archivist Charles Farrugia said in the National Archives' latest annual report, the site was unceremoniously taken back to develop a new concert area. That project had been announced in May 2019 – a month before the deed transferring land to the National Archives was signed.

The government decided to take back the site in 2021, with the proposed archives making way for a car park. Farrugia, stressed that before what he described as the National Archives' "greatest disappointment" took place, his team had "dedicated a lot of time and energy to arrive at the best concept and design for the Ta' Qali archives hub." He confirmed that the National Archives had even sought the technical support of their French counterparts, the Archives Nationales, home to one of the largest and oldest archive collections in the world.

"All these dreams faded away when the Ta' Qali site was unceremoniously 'taken over,'" Farrugia lamented. The annual report appears to have been published last year, but it – and Farrugia's remarks – largely flew under the radar until the story was picked up by [MaltaToday](#) a few days ago.

For the time being, the National Archives continue to be based at the former Santo Spirito Hospital in Rabat – a site which had been used as a hospital as early as 1372, as an old document held by the National Archives confirms. The site, however, is far too small for the National Archives's collection, which is currently scattered across seven repositories.

"We may keep adding to the repositories but in the long run the system risks collapsing," Farrugia had said. The transfer of the archives to Ta' Qali would also have facilitated the transformation of the old hospital into, appropriately enough, a museum about the history of medicine in Malta: plans which now necessarily remain on hold.

The National Archives now have to wait for a new site to be identified by the government, with no indications that such a site has been identified yet. Earlier this week, culture minister Owen Bonnici said in reply to a parliamentary question that potential sites are being evaluated.

President Spiteri Debono has now delved into the debate, after visiting the Santo Spirito Hospital at the invitation of Farrugia.

Farrugia and his team, as one may expect, emphasised the urgency of identifying a new site in which the national archives can be housed "according to the best standards in the field of archiving in order to safeguard the documents compiling the history and collective memory of the people of Malta."

And the president – during her visit and through a statement issued to the press – made clear that she agreed with the National Archives' plea.

She also stressed the need to have all documents gathered in one place.



**'Oldest' HMV sign in the world
smashed by concrete pump
in Valletta**

Very sad news today. A crane doing works at city lights (building opposite) last night smashed our much-loved sign which is an integral part of the Valletta!! This construction madness is ruining our country!!! But who cares!!! *D'Amato Records Facebook*

The iconic HMV sign above the doorway of D'Amato Records was smashed overnight, with owners blaming a nearby construction crew for the damage.

Styled as the oldest record shop in the world, D'Amato Records, in St John's Street in Valletta, has had the sign since right after World War II, co-owner Anthony

D'Amato told *Times of Malta* on Thursday.

D'Amato said the incident has left him "in shock" and that he plans on filing a police report over the damage.

"The sign was hung up after war. It is the oldest HMV sign in the world and most likely the most photographed one in Valletta," he said. The iconic HMV sign adorning the entrance of D'Amato Records, a historic establishment in Valletta claiming to be the world's oldest record shop, was severely damaged. The owners have pointed fingers at a nearby construction crew for the incident, which has sparked outrage and renewed concerns about the impact of construction on Malta's cultural heritage.

Anthony D'Amato, the owner of the shop located on St John's Street, revealed that the sign had been a fixture since the immediate aftermath of World War II.

The damage to the HMV sign is not just a loss for the shop but for Valletta's cultural landscape. It comes at a poignant time for the D'Amato family, who in 2021 mourned the loss of Anthony D'Amato, the gentle and soft-spoken patriarch who had run the shop for 60 years before succumbing to a sudden illness



Lace making in Malta

One of the most important craft in Malta is traditional Maltese lace (bizzilla), which is bobbin lace of the filet-guipure variety. It is created on pillow stuffed with straw, with traditional designs featuring Genoese-style leafwork, and often the Maltese cross, but not necessarily. Historically, Maltese lace was worked on black or white silk, although nowadays it's more common on ivory-coloured linen. You can find Maltese lace in tablecloths, placemats, serviettes, couture, other decorative items and in traditional Maltese costume.

Lace making has been popular since the 16th century, and Queen Victoria of England is said to be particularly fond of wearing Malta lace. In 1839, Thomas McGill noted in 'A Handbook, or Guide, for Strangers visiting Malta', that: "the females of the island make also excellent lace; the lace mitts and gloves wrought by the Malta girls

are bought by all ladies coming to the island; orders from England are often sent for them on account of their beauty and cheapness." Lace making is taught in special programs around Malta and Gozo, and remains a cottage industry throughout the islands.



THE MALTESE GUILD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Members are invited to join us for a complimentary beverage and pastizzi following the meeting.

Dear Members, I am pleased to invite you to the **2024 Annual General Meeting** of The Maltese Guild of SA Inc. to be held on **Sunday 4th August at 2:00pm at 6 Jeanes Street, Beverley**. Mr Frank Scicluna has been appointed **Returning Officer** and will conduct the elections for office bearers. In accordance with the procedures prescribed in the Constitution, nominations from **financial and Life Members of the Maltese Guild of SA** are now being called for the following vacancies: **President (2 Years)** and **Councillors (1 Year)**. **Nomination forms are available from the Secretary, and shall be requested via the Guild's email address: malteseguildsainc@gmail.com**

Completed **Nomination Forms** (no later than 1st August) must be addressed to:

The Returning Officer c/o The Maltese Guild SA Inc. 6 Jeanes Street, Beverley 5009

We look forward to your attendance. Regards, Margaret Abela Secretary



ST. CATHERINE SOCIETY OF SA INC



The **St. Catherine Society of SA** is inviting you to attend the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** for 2024 to be held on the **18th August at St. Brigid Hall, 43**

LeHunte Street, Kilburn at. 2:00pm.

There will a sausage sizzle at 1.00pm. Nominations will be taken from the floor.

Following the meeting you are invited for a cup of coffee. If you have any queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact **Bernadette Buhagiar – 0420 944 205** or **Agnes Borg – 0422 485 059**

Looking forward to seeing you at the AGM. **Agnes Borg – Secretary St Catherine Society of SA Inc**

THE MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Every Friday the Club at 49 LeHunte Stret, Kilburn SA opens its doors for the members and friends of the association from 10am till 3.30pm. The Maltese Senior Citizens society was established 41 years ago. It had hundreds of members and organises luncheons, bus trips, Christmas in July, Easter and Christmas special functions, Mothers' and Fathers' Days, carpet bowling, bingo and several other social and cultural activities. The weekly event gives the opportunity to members to have a good chat (mainly in Maltese) and a yarn over a cup of tea



Frank Grima

or coffee and a couple of Mansueto's pastizzi. Godwin Gauci publishes the association's Bulletin every month to keep the members updated of what's going on and to advertise future functions. Jane, Alice and Mary (and other volunteers) help with the preparation of food and Eddie and Tony serve drinks at the bar. John is always busy preparing the hall for the day and he welcomes the members at the door. Marcel Grguric from the Multicultural Aged Care assists in organising social activities for the seniors and brings with him printed copies of this Maltese Journal written by Frank Scicluna and gives a copy to those present. Unfortunately, during the epidemic episode of Covid19 and recently the passing away of the President Frank Grima the numbers attending the club decreased significantly because the club had to closed for several weeks.

While we applaud the members of the committee and volunteers who are trying to keep the club going, we urge the members of other societies and of the Maltese community to support this club that at this stage is in dire need of help and pay a visit. Everyone is welcome. *Unite to Survive.*

THE YORK 'MEILAK' STORY

It was 70 years ago on 30th June 1954 that my parents, Loreto and Olive, and I disembarked from the 'Himalaya' at Station Pier, Melbourne, Australia, to start a new life in a new country.

As a migrant child, I grew up to make a contribution in the field of immigration and ethnic history. I undertook much original research and had several books and research papers published. My generation of migrants' parents were too busy in the factories (like my dad) to pay attention to 'ethnic

history'. But through their dedication and sacrifices, many of their children went to university and a few of us studied History and became aware of the new fields of research in the Australian story.

Forty years ago, I recorded my first proper oral history interview - which was with a Maltese migrant. I kept recording oral history interviews, including for the National Library of Australia, and recently recorded my 500th oral history interview. They are mostly with migrants: Maltese, Italians, English, Poles, Lebanese and most recently a project about the Indian diaspora. Among this audio-archive are more than 30 interviews, recorded in the mid 1980s, with Maltese migrants who came to Australia in the 1910s and 1920s - in other words, migrant voices from a century and more ago.

My Maltese dad had been stationed in London after the War with the Royal Air Force (which he joined in Malta in 1940) and married my Londoner mother in 1947. My parents benefited from the post-war assisted migration scheme - 'Ten Pound Poms' scheme. I was three (and travelled for free).

The 19,000 km voyage took about a month.

Life is full of irony. My mother told her brother and sister at Tilbury Docks that she'd be back in two years. My dad was really keen to emigrate to Melbourne but mum not so. However, they both believed the move would be good for me, their son, as London had experienced 'The Great Smog' of 1952, which killed thousands of Londoners in one weekend. It was mostly babies and the elderly who died (ie, the authorities ran out of coffins). My parents told me that I developed a bronchial problem because of the smog and I'd "cough my lungs up" in my cot.

They made the decision primarily for me.

My dad had two brothers in Melbourne - Joe Meilak and Michael Meilak. Joe, a wharfie, kindly nominated us for assisted passage and provided initial accommodation in his humble West Melbourne home. In 1984, I recorded an oral history with my uncle Joe. I recently digitized the cassette and made it into a youtube clip. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7g3xIVkrk60> The interview goes for a couple of hours and is a rich historical source, as he emigrated to Melbourne from Malta as a 20 year old in 1924 - a century ago. He died in Melbourne, in 1988.

Accommodation was a big problem for new arrivals. It didn't work out with Joe and his lovely wife, Daisy, and we then went to live in Coburg with uncle Michael. Again, it didn't work out and for the next 20 months we went from boarding-house to boarding-house - five in all, in Coburg and Brunswick. They weren't always nice places.



Then, in 1956, my hard-working parents put a deposit on our own home in Shamrock Street, West Brunswick. It was a joyous occasion, especially for me as a kid who had been technically 'homeless' from the age of three to five.

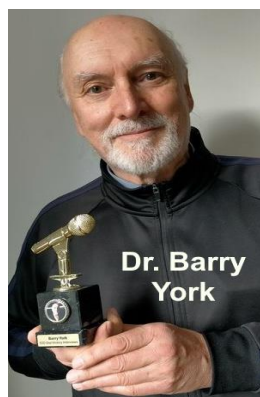
The irony was that my mother fell in love with Australia very quickly. She loved its wide open spaces, the friendliness of the people and the lack of formal hierarchy in the workplace. It took her a while to adjust to calling her boss "Stan" rather than "Mister Long".

My dad, who had been so keen to emigrate, hated it here in the early years. He found it "backward" and had expected Melbourne to be a mini-London. He never really adjusted to Australia and, despite having changed his name in London after the War, always said he was Maltese. He identified as Maltese rather than Australian, and never engaged in the hyphenated 'Maltese-Australian' concept. In his final years, he even said to me: "Leaving Malta was the worst mistake I ever made". (Though of course, he didn't just 'leave', he volunteered to fight Fascism and Nazism and was sent overseas by the RAF).

My mum died 21 years ago and dad 15 years ago. They were typical migrants - hard working, determined to make a better life than they had back in their homelands, pursuing the elusive butterfly known as happiness. They settled well into the community of Brunswick, Melbourne, where they resided for 40 years. I feel privileged to have grown up there for 30 years, years in which my hometown was an unselfconscious multicultural community, very working class, dotted with factories, textile mills and quarries even in the residential areas.

I cannot know how I would have ended up had I grown up in London. And I am not nationalistic, so I don't say that "Australia is the best country in the world". But I am very grateful to my parents for bringing me here. I'm glad to have grown up in Australia and especially in a place like the old Brunswick.

I'm sometimes asked how I identify in terms of my own ethnicity. My mum identified as English and as Australian but retained the accent and manners of an English lady (with just an occasional hint of Cockney). My dad, as I said, regarded himself as Maltese. Personally, I think of myself as a Brunswegian or 'Brunswick boy'. Apart from that, I'm a cosmopolitan who could probably live happily in any modern industrial society in which English is a common language.



MEET BARRY – a big warm congratulation to our friend Barry York who recorded his 500th oral history interviews a few days ago in Sydney. During the last 40 years worked on about 1,500 hours of interviews about migration to Australia, including 90 early Maltese migrants. More than 30 went to Australia in the 1910s and 1920s and represent voices of a migration vintage of more than a century ago.

Barry York (b. 1951) was born in London, the son of a Maltese airman and his English wife. His family migrated to Melbourne in 1954 and he grew up in Brunswick. He attended La Trobe University, where he was deeply involved in student politics. In 1971, following a blockade of a University Council meeting, he was one of eight students who were excluded from the University. In the following year, he and two other students were gaoled in Pentridge Gaol for several weeks for contempt of court. The University successfully applied for their release and York then completed his Arts degree. He subsequently taught at schools in Victoria and New South Wales. From 1981 to 1988 he was a postgraduate student at the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales, where he gained a doctorate. In 1989 he joined the staff of the Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies at The Australian National University and he was a research fellow at the Centre from 1991 to 1996. He was a research fellow at the Victoria University of Technology in Melbourne in 1997–99. He was then employed as a historian with the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House until his retirement in 2016.



I was reminded recently of how enduring the journey of grief can be.

I was also reminded of how innocent but careless or ignorant statements can complicate the healing process.

Statements like: "God took your daughter" "It was meant to be" And a variety of other statements.

In the incarnation, God became human in the person of Jesus Christ for a number of reasons. Among these reasons is God

revealing God's self as eminently personal and absolutely Loving. God enters the mystery of evil, pain and death to let us know that God walks with us as we face these challenges. God never directly wishes evil.

However, God turns everything to good for us.

God also does not normally directly intervene with nature all the time.

If God kept on doing so then nature could not continue on its normal processes.

There is much mystery in this. However, some things are clear and certain.

God's love is absolute and unconditional.

God is always there for us. God promised to look after us in life and in death.

God has promised a place for us with God and with each other forever.

When someone dies prematurely or otherwise, God is there to collect them and look after them in absolute tenderness and love beyond imagining.

When someone is in pain and suffering God has not gone away or turned his face away.

He remained faithful to Jesus in His sufferings and will remain faithful to us.

Just because we cannot understand everything does not negate the above.

God walks with us in our grief, our pain, and even our death.

How important it is for us not to give quick and glib answers.

Sometimes the best thing we can do at first is to just be there and allow the grieving person to feel what they feel and to say what they want to say and be present in loving silence.

Grief is indeed a journey and each experience is unique. There are no shortcuts. There is certainly a need for much loving companionship and a patient yet trusting presence!



Malta horse racing and *brilli* game in Gozo feature on new stamps

This year, MaltaPost has again joined members of the Euromed Postal Joint Stamp Project in the issue of a new set of stamps bearing a common theme – Sports in the Mediterranean.'

The two MaltaPost stamps feature traditional Maltese

sport activities, specifically horse racing in Malta and the brilli game in Gozo.

Horse racing has a tradition in Malta that generates excitement and joy to many. It is a family pastime passed down generations. The €0.38 stamp shows a horse and jockey speeding down a racetrack. The rider is Angelo Agius (1920-2017), known as "Il-Gen?," a veteran Maltese jockey and horse owner from Qormi.

The second stamp, bearing a denomination of €2.00, shows a group of three adults enjoying an outdoor game of brilli, a local version of skittles unique to the island of Gozo.

This set will be issued in a sheet of 10 stamps, with each stamp measuring 44mm x 31mm, with a comb perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 and bearing the Maltese Cross watermark. The sheets measure 185mm x 118mm and were produced by Printex Ltd in the offset process.

Miriam Gauci will again give vocal master classes in Gaulitana



Once again, Gaulitana: A Festival of Music will again include a series of vocal master classes by the internationally renowned Maltese soprano Miriam Gauci, part of the educational program of the festival, GauLearn.

The master classes are open to all singers and they also welcome passive participants. These will take place between Thursday 1 and Saturday 3 August, 2024, with sessions at the Gozo Visual and Performing Arts School, Xewkija, of the M. A. Vassalli college.

The resident pianist will be Francis Camilleri. The master class closes with a public concert, for which admission is free. The applications, which will be received until July 18, can be obtained from the Gaulitana site. More details can be obtained by email to gaulitanafestival@gmail.com. Gaulitana: A Festival of Music, which is currently in its 17th edition, is mainly supported by the Investment in Cultural Organizations - Gozo scheme of the Maltese Arts Council and the Ministry for Gozo.

Active participants fee: €190 (to be paid in full by the 24th July at noon)

Passive participants fee: €30 (with participants to get directly in touch via email)

Account Name: Gaulitanus Choir - Gaulitana: A Festival of Music

IBAN: MT10VALL22013000000040024294742

BIC: VALMTMTXXX

Bank of Valletta, Victoria, Gozo, Malta

Dates: 1-3 August 2024

Application Deadline: 18 July 2024



WELCOME TO OUR NEW SUBSCRIBER FROM CHICAGO USA – Fr. Ed Vella

Thanks for your email and for adding me to the email listing. Rena Xuereb, author of *COURAGE OF A MALTESE IMMIGRANT*, is my aunt, my mother's sister. My father, Emanuel Vella, came from Luqa and mother, Grace Xuereb, from Burmarrad, Malta. They met in Detroit, USA. I was born in Detroit in 1957. In 1978 I professed vows as a Redemptorist missionary, ordained priest in 1985 and have been assigned to various parishes and retreat centres in the USA and was a missionary in the Amazon Valley of Brazil. Presently I am serving as associate pastor of St. Michael in Old Town, in

Chicago, USA, the church in which I was ordained a priest. Some of my family, on both sides of the family, emigrated from Malta to Australia. as well as to the UK and the USA

**Fr. Edward Vella, CSsR Associate Pastor St. Michael Church in Old Town
1633 N. Cleveland Ave. Chicago, IL 60614 United States of America**

St. Michael Church in Old Town - Chicago

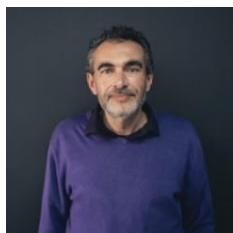


St. Michael in Old Town was started by the Diocese of Chicago to serve the many German immigrants who had come to Chicago. As these immigrants settled in Chicago, they moved into the area north of the Chicago River known today as "Old Town." The Archdiocese authorized the founding of St. Michael Parish in 1852, and a committee was established to organize the new parish, which was to be located near North Avenue and Larrabee Street. Michael Diversey, a prosperous immigrant brewer donated a small plot of land at North Avenue and Church Street (later to become Hudson Street) for the newly founded St. Michael's parish. With property in hand, the committee set about to build a modest house of worship. With the bishop's consent, the new parish was named for St. Michael, under the patronage of the archangel and in gratitude for Michael Diversey's land donation.

The church was one of 7 buildings to 'survive' the path of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, although it was heavily damaged. While most of Old Chicago's infrastructure was made of wood, the church was made of brick which helped it survive the fire.. However, only portions of the building survived, like the stone. The church was quickly rebuilt.

The task of rebuilding began within a week, and a wooden combination church and school was erected. The roof was complete in October 1872, and on October 12, 1873, the rebuilt St. Michael's church was consecrated and rededicated. St. Michael's was one of the first Chicago churches to rise again from the ashes of the Great Fire. On January 30, 1876, the five bells in the as-yet unfinished church tower rang out officially for the first time. The original tower bells had melted into a bronze mass and collapsed into the church building as the roof blazed. The new bells were blessed and dedicated and were named: St. Michael, St. Mary, St. Joseph, St. Alphonsus, and St. Theresa... As the 20th century began, work began on redecorating the church's interior...

Maltese like their rabbit fried in wine and garlic



First ever study on Maltese rabbit culinary preferences confirms that the Maltese prefer buying their rabbit whole with the head on and purchased from local sources



by **James Debono**

Maltese consumers from rural areas prefer to source their rabbit meat from family and friends that rear rabbits for their own consumption. And the overwhelming majority prefer the whole carcass with the head still attached.

This emerges from a study based on a telephone survey with a sample of 250 respondents randomly chosen from five rural localities in the western part of the island. This is the first study conducted locally to assess the perceptions and behaviour of Maltese consumers with regards to rabbit meat consumption.

The study has just been published on the World Rabbit Science journal and is authored by Francesco Luca Alexander and George Attard from the University of Malta's Institute of Earth Sciences and Noel Buttigieg from the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy.

Nearly everyone likes rabbit

Less than 8% (19 out of 250) said that they did not consume rabbit meat at all. Only 2% did not consume rabbit because they are vegan or because they associate rabbits with pets. The minority that does not eat rabbit simply does so because they dislike the taste.

For the majority, rabbit meat is a regular part of their diet, with 66% of respondents consuming it at least once a month.

Respondents consistently rated rabbit meat as tastier and healthier compared to other meats. The preferred cut of the rabbit is the thigh, which is preferred for its tenderness and flavour.

Most like it fried in wine and garlic

Traditional cooking methods, such as frying and braising, often with wine and garlic, are the most common ways to prepare rabbit meat. These methods are integral to the preparation of "fenkata," a traditional Maltese dish that is central to family gatherings and festive occasions.

The preservation and transmission of such recipes through generations underscore the cultural importance of rabbit meat in Malta. But none of the respondents showed a preference for rabbit pie which was the traditional way of preparing rabbit at the time of the Order of Saint John as documented by historian Carmel Cassar.

Most prefer to buy from local sources

Trust in the supply chain emerged as a significant concern among respondents. There is a marked preference for sourcing rabbit meat from family or friends who rear rabbits, rather than from butchers and supermarkets.

A remarkable 95% of those interviewed expressed a preference for home-grown rabbits, indicating a strong distrust of the commercial supply chain.

This preference is rooted in concerns over the quality of commercially available rabbit meat, with respondents believing that home-grown meat is fresher and of higher quality. Only 19% of respondents regularly purchase rabbit meat from local butcher shops and supermarkets, reflecting this widespread mistrust.

Keep their head on

An interesting finding from the study is the preference for rabbit carcasses with the head attached. Many respondents associate the presence of the head with freshness and quality, as it indicates that the carcass has not been tampered with.

This preference also ties into traditional practices and recipes, where the head is often used in cooking. The head-on carcass is seen as a mark of authenticity and trustworthiness, further emphasising the importance of transparency in the supply chain.

Price does not matter much

Despite rabbit meat being more expensive than other meats, with an average price of around €10 per kilogram at the time of the study, price does not seem to be a major deterrent for most consumers. This willingness to pay a premium for rabbit meat highlights its cultural and gastronomical importance in Maltese society. The high value placed on rabbit meat suggests that its consumption is driven more by cultural and traditional factors than by economic considerations.

Rabbit is healthy

Respondents ranked rabbit meat as the healthiest option compared to other meats such as poultry, beef, pork, and lamb. Despite this perception, rabbit meat ranks third in consumption frequency after chicken and beef. This discrepancy suggests that while rabbit meat is considered healthy, its consumption is often reserved for special occasions and traditional meals, rather than being a staple in the daily diet.

The study concludes that rabbit remains a “go-to” food item especially in times of festivities, celebrations and family gatherings and that home grown sources are still preferred over retailed carcasses. But it remains to be seen whether the same trends prevail in urban localities which were not covered in the survey.

The authors recommend further research in urban areas to see if the same trends prevail.



Malta-born Kevin Bonavia elected to the House of Commons

The 46-year-old spent his childhood in Rabat

Mario Xuereb

Kevin Bonavia stood as a candidate for Stevenage.

Malta-born Kevin Bonavia has been elected to the House of Commons on the Labour Party ticket. He was elected from the north London constituency of Stevenage in Hertfordshire, turning it red for the first time since 2010.

Bonavia amassed 17,698 votes beating Conservative Alex Clarkson who received 11,080 votes. Labour won the elections held on Thursday by a landslide and is projected to win over well over 400 seats. Speaking soon after the result for Stevenage was announced, Bonavia said it was “honour of his life” to be elected. He promised to “return the role of MP to its founding purpose – service.”

Bonavia delivering his victory speech in Stevenage on Thursday night

Born in Malta 46 years ago, he spent his early childhood in Rabat and helped his father rent umbrellas and boats on the beach. Then, aged 8, he moved to the UK where his dad worked as a cab driver before his parents started a café and then a video rental store.

In his victory speech, Bonavia paid tribute to his parents’ role, thanking them for instilling in him from a young age the idea that “if someone needs help, or there’s a problem that needs to be fixed, you roll up your sleeves and you fix it.”

Stevenage was created as a constituency in 1983. It voted Tory for 14 years until Tony Blair won a landslide for Labour in 1997 and Barbara Follett replaced Tim Wood as its MP. Kevin Bonavia takes up the mantle from Tory MP Stephen McParland who decided to call it a day.

Times of Malta

The ancient chapels of the Maltese Islands

MTA - Malta Tourism Authority - published on 09/28/21

No other Christian land in Western Europe can claim to have such a great number of chapels per square kilometre.

The Maltese and Gozitan countryside is dotted with numerous ancient chapels; there is no other Christian land in Western Europe that can boast of such a great number of chapels per square kilometre. This is clear evidence of the steadfast love the Maltese and the Gozitans have always had for their Catholic faith, and the devotion they have always shown to God, his Holy Blessed Mother, and the saints. Every original settlement had at least one church, but many, such as that of Bir Miftuħ and Ħal Millieri, can also be found standing alone in the open countryside. Several of these chapels now seem to be isolated because the villages associated with them were abandoned centuries ago, but other chapels were, and still are, purposely built in remote locations—for instance the cliffs of Dingli, or very fertile valleys like that of Wied l-Lunzjata in Gozo.

Many of the chapels we see today are built on the sites of chapels erected centuries before, like that of Our Lady of Mercy in Qrendi and St. Catherine in Żejtun. Indeed, the date of origin of some chapels is unknown. Also, the origins of some chapels are ancient cave churches—the edifice was practically an expansion of these troglodytic sacred sites. Almost all of the chapels, although simple and rustic, have different characteristics and tell different stories. Many consider the numerous chapels that dot the Islands as time capsules, which take us back to the medieval age when the only industries were those of the farmer, the shepherd and the fisherman. They make us think and reflect on our roots and origins. Here are a few examples of charming and stunning chapels that transport us back in time to the sacred sites where our ancestors prayed.

The information used for this article was summarized and translated from the exceptional website dedicated to Maltese chapels Kappelli Maltin [<https://www.kappellimaltin.com/index.html>]. A special thanks goes to Roderick Busuttil who directed us in the compilation and review of this article. We would also like to give tribute to Kilin (Mikiel Spiteri – 1917 - 2008), who through his writings was one of the first, if not the first, modern authors to raise awareness about the precious and incomparable chapels of the Maltese Islands.



CHAPEL OF ST. MARY OF BIR MIFTUĦ, GUDJA

The church is dedicated to St. Mary of August. **The Church of Bir Miftuħ** (a literal translation is “open well,” but here it probably means “gushing spring”) is very old. Indeed, it was built over 600 years ago. In 1436, an ecclesiastical report on the Maltese Islands (known as the *Rollo*) mentioned the 10 old parishes found in Malta and Gozo at that time -- one of them was the Parish of *Bir Miftuħ*. The original church in the village of *Gudja* was larger than the present one. In 1512, works were carried out to reduce its size. The church itself is

situated in an olive grove. **As it lies opposite Malta International Airport, it is one of the first interesting sites that visitors notice the minute they land in our country.**

The *Bir Miftuħ* church is a fine example of medieval architecture, simple in construction with no elaboration, neither on the exterior walls nor on the interior ones. During extensive restoration works carried out a few years ago, many interesting historical artifacts were unearthed. These increased the historical and architectural significance of the old church. For example, **old frescoes dating back to the 16th century above the main door came to light.**

CHAPEL OF THE ANNUNCIATION, ҒAL MILLIERI, ҒURRIEQ

In the midst of the green countryside situated in the ancient village of Ғurrieq, we find a medieval chapel dedicated to the Annunciation. It is very ancient, **as the first chapel was built during the 13th century.** Before the chapel was built, the site was occupied by a Roman villa, the remains of which can still be observed within the vicinity of the chapel. The present building was erected around 1480. The chapel is rustic, built in the style of a box, devoid of any windows or oculi, which are so common in other country chapels. The roof is supported by four pointed arches in Siculo-Norman style.

The last arcade leads to the main altar and apse. **Remains of what was once a gate before the sanctuary, known as an *iconostasis*, can still be seen, which shows the influence of the Orthodox-Byzantine religious tradition and art in medieval times.** The chapel grounds used to serve also as a graveyard, and this was the case even when the first chapel was built.

On the right side there is a small door that leads to the cemetery. During the plague of 1813, many of the dead were buried here. **The chapel is famous for the 11 frescoes adorning its walls.** It is probable that the frescoes are copies of those in the original chapel. **Almost all the frescoes represent Orthodox-Byzantine Saints, including St. Leonard and St. Nicholas.** Devotion to them was more popular prior to the 13th century than in the 15th century when they were painted. During the 1960s the chapel was entrusted to the care of the NGO *Din l-Art Helwa*. Several extensive restoration works have been carried out to keep the chapel in good condition.

THE SANTA MARIA CHAPEL OF ҒAL XLUQ, SIḒḒIEWI

In the village of SiḒḒiewi we find a chapel dedicated to the Assumption, **Patroness of Malta**, popularly known by the name of Ta' Ғal Xluq. SiḒḒiewi is a very old village. In 1436 it was already organized as a parish. The village consisted of four hamlets, and Ғal Xluq was the largest. This we know because it was documented in the *Rollo* (list) of Bishop Senatore de Mello, which was drawn up in the same year. In the report of Mons Pietro Dusina, written in 1575, we find that in Ғal Xluq there were six churches and the principal one was this chapel. We do not have the date of its

building, but it is very ancient. In the succeeding years, the chapel was closed down because it was in a very bad state, but in 1583, it was rebuilt. **It is considered one of the most beautiful among the many country chapels we have here.** The half-framing arc of the main door is testimony to its antiquity. Its stone-slab roof rests on arches that continue down to the floor, another proof of its several centuries of life.

The titular altar piece is a painting of the Assumption. To the right of this main piece, there is another painting of Christ before Pilate. **Both paintings are attributed to the students of the School of the famous Maltese artist Francesco Zahra.** Recently, some restoration works were carried out, foremost on the old and very rare 17th-century *Ottavino* organ.

CHAPELS OF ST. BASIL AND ST. MICHAEL, MQABBA

The architecture of St. Basil's chapel is a **medieval gem**. It is not exactly known when devotion to this saint of the Orthodox Church began in Mqabba. **It is thought that in the Middle Ages, when the Muslims were invading Europe, some foreigners fled from their countries and sought refuge in Mqabba, where they built a church dedicated to the saint they venerated back home.** In recent years studies have shown that this church already existed in 1486. A devotional feast used to be celebrated on June 14; according to tradition, this is the day when St. Basil was ordained. The titular painting was a wooden triptych Byzantine-style icon,

which depicted the Madonna in the center, and St. Basil and St. Joseph on the sides. **Some say that the central place reserved to the Madonna is proof that the main feast was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, notwithstanding the dedication of the church to St. Basil.**

The church of St. Michael is adjacent to the church of St. Basil. **In fact, there is access from one church to the other through a side aperture, even though both churches have their own main doors.** It seems that originally this church was built in 1550; however, it was rebuilt in 1669. The popularity of this church and the three statues in the village dedicated to this Archangel show the great devotion to St. Michael there was in Mqabba.

CHAPEL OF ST. CECILIA, GĦAJNSIELEM GOZO

This chapel dedicated to St. Cecilia was built c. 1540. It was restored in 1630 and served as a church up to 1644, when it was deconsecrated. **This small stone church is the best example of a non-aisled chapel, one of many in the Gozitan countryside.** Like other late medieval chapels, it is in cubical form except for the slight pitch of the roof. In 1613, the neighboring fort was built to protect the farming community.

A few years later ix-Xewkija became the first rural parish of Gozo, and the building of the parish church of St. John the Baptist meant that the center of religious activity shifted east. **The tower and**

church were listed as Grade One monuments in 1996, but little was done to protect the chapel which was battered by weather and vandalism until it was finally entrusted to Wirt Għawdex (Gozo Heritage) in 2008. **Fully restored, it is open to visitors as well as hosting lectures, exhibitions, and concerts.**

CHAPEL OF THE RETURN OF THE HOLY FAMILY FROM EGYPT IN COMINO

The islet of Comino is **only two square miles in size. Today, it is practically uninhabited (only two residents) but serves as a tourist and holiday attraction.** In medieval times it served many corsairs as a safe haven for their activities. The Comino Chapel, which is part of the Gozo Diocese, had to be rebuilt several times. **Originally the chapel was dedicated to the Assumption, and that is why it is still called "the Church of Santa Maria." But tradition maintains that the devotion of the local farmers to the Returning Holy Family was so great that when they reconstructed it, they dedicated it to the Return of the Holy Family of Nazareth.**

The present chapel was built by Grandmaster Alof de Wignacourt in 1618, but the building of the first original chapel is unknown. It also seems that there was a chapel here in the mid-13th century, and this we know from a map drawn up in those years, where the Comino Chapel is marked. The map is presently in the Greenwich Museum.

However, **the chapel, as is attested by modern research, could have been a troglodyte one. There is a legend that St. Conrad found refuge in the chapel after being driven out violently out of Mosta.** In Gozo there was another holy hermit and both men would visit each other by sailing on their mantles.

CHAPEL OF THE ANCIENT SAVIOR OF LIJA

In the midland village of Lija there is a very beautiful chapel dedicated to the Savior. The chapel, believed to have been built during the first decade of the 16th century, is considered a fine specimen of local architecture. **Its style is simple and rather rustic.** It had only one nave. However, during the following century, it was enlarged with the construction of two wings, making it in the form of the cross. In 1594, Hal Lija became a separate parish and the chapel served as its parish church. It continued to serve this role for about a century until the present church was built. **This is the reason why the old chapel is referred to as that of the "Ancient" Savior.**

The chapel boasted six altars, and six Masses were celebrated daily. Today only two altars remain. For a time, it was almost semi-abandoned, but now the chapel is well kept and a pleasure to visit. The chapel is situated in a grove of olive trees, which generate the spiritual atmosphere of Gethsemani. **Every year, during Holy Week, the chapel organizes a tableau of the Last Supper of Jerusalem. The table is set as for the Jewish Passover meal.** On the Feast of Christ the Savior, on August 6, the procession stops in front of the chapel, **the titular statue is turned to face the chapel, and the participants sing the Hymn of the Savior.**

CHAPEL OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN BALZAN

This chapel lies in the oldest part of the village of Balzan, situated in the very middle of the Island of Malta, that is, in its very core. The first reference we have of this ancient church is found in Msgr. Pietro Dusina's report, which he wrote during his apostolic visit of February, 1575. It is stated that from its very beginning the church was dedicated to the Annunciation. **Professor Stanley Fiorini, an authority on the subject, describes its architecture as that common in Malta during the 15th-century.** As soon as you see it, you will be surprised how much it was preserved in its original state. This fact bears witness to the parishioners' love and devotion towards the Annunciation.

The church's style is simple and rustic. On the inside, the roof rests on six Siculo-Norman arches with rows of stone benches between the arches. **During his visit, Dusina estimated that in those times the church served about 300 worshipers, from 60 households.** Mgr. Dusina was impressed by its beauty and describes the church as *pulchris* (Latin for beautiful). Today the chapel has one altar dedicated to the Annunciation, but during another pastoral visit, this time by Bishop Tommaso Gargallo in December 1601, the church had three altars: the centerpiece dedicated

to the Annunciation, the one on the right to the Visitation of Mary, and the one on the left, also to the Annunciation. **The painter of the titular image of the Annunciation is unknown.** On March 25, a solemn High Mass is celebrated, and many worshipers attend this liturgical function.

Indian Community in Malta St.Paul's Latin Community



Dear Frank,

I would like to thank you wholeheartedly for sending me your most interesting and up to date Maltese journal for the Maltese diaspora. The articles are so informative and factual that I make it a point to read all of them.

I would like to make a clarification about an article which appeared in Page 6 of the Maltese E-Newsletter No. 520 of May 2024. In the article's second paragraph which read, " A church is Bormla (Cospicua) opened its

doors.....delivering Mass in Malayalam for the first time in its history". I cannot say if this was a first for Mass in the Bormla church, but surely it was not the first time that Mass was said in the Malayalam language in Malta.

Going back when the Indian community in Malta was expanding, the first Mass in Malayalam was said about six years ago by Fr. Jacob Palakkaran OFM. Conv. at Qawra Parish Church dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi. This was celebrated in the Syro-Malabar rite. Then, in April 2022 Fr. Damian Veliyil OFM Conv. came to Malta, delivering the first Mass in his native language in May 2022, in the Latin rite. Fr. Damian has, since then, organised the Indian Catholic Community and is now entrusted with the pastoral care of the Catholic Indian community (Latin Rite), ie. Parish Priest as per Decree issued by the Archbishop's Curia in Floriana under the signature of His Grace the Archbishop of Malta Mons. Charles J. Scicluna and Fr. Charles Bugeja as Chancellor, attached.

As for activities organised by this community, I am hereby attaching a press release about the recently organised Mass and cultural/entertainment activity only two months ago and reported in the local press.

One can also access the community's face book page at: [St.Paul's Latin Community Malta](https://www.facebook.com/StPaulsLatinCommunityMalta)

Best regards, JOHN BASON PRO



Indian Catholic society in Malta marks second anniversary

Principal guest was Fr Colin Sammut, provincial of the Franciscan Conventual Community. John Baspn



Guests at the event adorned with a traditional Indian shawl to signify the community's gratitude to them.

Press Release

On the occasion of the foundation's 2nd anniversary of the St. Paul's Latin Community, a society for Indian Roman Catholic believers, a commemorative event was held on Sunday 5th May at the Alleluia Hall next to the Franciscan Conventual Friary in St. Paul's Bay.

The founder and priest in charge of the community, Fr. Damian Veliyil delivered a welcoming speech. Mass was concelebrated by Monsignor Dennis Kuruppassery, First Counsellor to the Apostolic Nuncio, Fr. Paul Punnackal George and Fr. Damian Veliyil.

Mr John and Mrs Lucienne Bason handed over the Family Book in the name of St. Paul's Latin Community to Mr. Latesh Alex, member of the same community.

The principal guest was Fr. Colin Sammut OFM Conv. Provincial of the Franciscan Conventual Community who was adorned with a traditional Indian shawl showing sincere gratitude by the community. Other guests adorned with the traditional shawl included Fr. Joseph Mamo OFM Conv., parish priest of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in St Paul's Bay, Monsignor Kuruppassery, First Counselor to the Nuncio, Fr. Paul Punnackal George, priest in charge of the Orthodox Syrian Church and other Franciscan Maltese and Indian Friars.

Afterwards a video presentation about the two years' journey of the Community was presented, an Instagram page was inaugurated, prizes were distributed and a cultural programme was presented which included traditional singing and dancing from Kerala State.

A short speech was delivered by Mr. Christopher Nelson, President of S. Paul's Latin Community thanking everyone who is working towards the well being of the community, followed by lunch – Indian



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Skola Maltija Sydney is a program of Akkademja Maltija ta' NSW Inc. Supported by the NSW Community Languages Schools Program, NSW Department of Education.

Happy Birthday Lic-ckejkna Isabelle

Kav Joe M Attard
Lulju 2024

Žmien sabiñ li tagħlaq žmienek
u tgħix hienja ma' tad-dar
u la tkun għadek qed tikber
żgur ma tafx x'inhu mrar!

Din hi l-ħajja ta' diċ-ckejkna
li tħobb tgħum, taqra u tinbex
lin-nanniet Giġi u Censa
ma twarrabx kif jibda jbexbex!

Faye u Joy l-aqwa ħbieb tagħha,
ma' dawn il-mama, l-papa,
illi magħhom ta' spiss toħroġ
u malajr tgħidlek ta, ta!

Tħobb tilgħab bil-pupi tagħha
u issajjar ġewwa l-kċina,
xejn ma tiekol ta' sustanza,
'mma ġelat, pizza, għaġina.

Žul min-nofs għax tħobb tikkmanda
kemm bil-Malti, kemm bl-Ingliż,
mal-kuġin Xmun taqbel sewwa
għaliex tagħha dan għażiż.

U xi ħarġa fuq d-dghajsa
maz-zijiet żgur ma titlifx
maz-zijiet Margie u Anthony
għaliex din ma tiġix spiss!

Ta' tliet snin din għandha storja
w Isabelle ma toqgħodx lura;
diġa dahlet sew fil-ħajja
dlonk imżewqa b'xi praspura.

Għat-tisjir hemm nanna Guża,
nanna Isabelle għall-Ingliż
ħalli b'hekk tippoża, tkanta –
mingħajr mummy ma tghaddix!

Nista' nibqa' nirrakkonta
fuq dis-sbejha ċkejna tagħna
li tlett snin illum qed tagħlaq
biex għal dejjem tibqa' magħna!



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The NSW Cumberland City Council mayor Lisa Lake presenting Dolores Meilak with the Ann Williams Clark Medallion for her 30years and 17years president for Holroyd Garden Club for home gardeners.



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the Consul General
 Dr. Gioconda Schembri,
 visited the Maltese Community
 Centre in Parkville
 where she met Ms Antonia Camilleri,
 President of MCCV and
 the dedicated employees
 of the welfare programme.
 She also enjoyed spending time
 with the attendees of the adult day
 centre run by the
 Maltese Community Council
 of VICTORIA



Mr Lawrence Buhagiar, Consul-General of Malta in NSW participated in the Traditional Feast of St Peter and St Paul, better known as " L-Imnarja ".



**I Had the
Pleasure of
Meeting for the
first time with a
very proud
Siggiewi
Resident by the
name of Aaron
Scifo.**

I got interested in his

Social Media Posts sometime ago. Like me he is very interested in the Maltase History and Cultural Evolution especially that pertaining to Siggiewi and Surrounds.

We first met over a soft drink at Papa's situated in the popular Siggiewi Pjazza or as it is better known 'Pjazza San Nikola '.

After an hour getting to know a little about each other we had a great chat about Siggiewi traditions, culture and especially it's history. The topic of various hamlets that really gave birth to the City of Siggiewi.

Of course the topic of my Campaign to have the Chapel of Mount Carmel at Fawwara Restored sneaked into the Conversation.

Aaron has accumulated a fair bit of Historical Information about Fawwara and Surrounds. He has collected so much information about the Chapel. He is a great source of Historical Information.

We even had a quick drive to a place near Mnajdra to show me a marvellous near hidden place where the early settlers used to harness and store water some seven thousand years ago. Also enjoyed the water view that we could almost touch Filfla.

The only disappointment was the ugly quarries and white dust being created by a couple of quarries that resemble Giant Ulcers in such beautiful pristine part of Siggiewi.

Maybe, maybe one day it will be fixed 🙌.

All in all it was a great way to spend a few hours with a gentleman who is as proud of Siggiewi as I am

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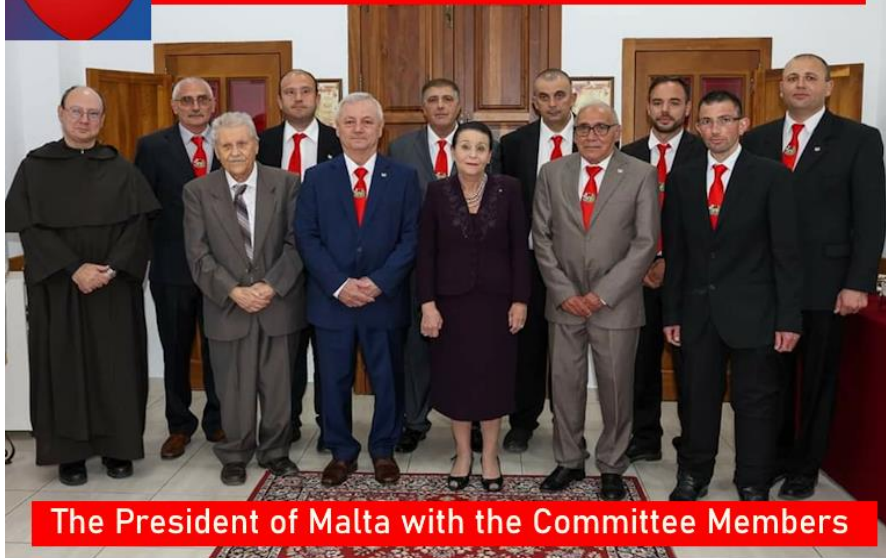
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IT WITH OTHERS.**

THIS IS YOUR JOURNAL

Socjeta' Filarmonika Santa Venera V.M.



OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE BAND CLUB



The President of Malta with the Committee Members



Socjeta' Filarmonika Santa Venera

We would like to thank all those who were participated in the official opening of the Socjeta' Filarmonika Santa Venera V.M and all those who attended.

Thanks to Her Excellency the president of Malta Myriam Spiteri Debono who liked to honour us with her presence and open officially the club.

. Thanks and congratulations to the Director Michael Ciantar and to all the band

players especially those who live in the locality as well as to the soprano Anita Vella Bondin and compere Brian Bonnici. Thank you and congratulations from the heart





Cycling - National Road Championship 2024 Third race

A hat-trick by Aidan Buttigieg and Jessica Pratt

Aidan Buttigieg of D Sports Lab and Jessica Pratt of Team Greens continued to win even in this third race of the National Road Championship organized by the Maltese Cycling Federation, which races was held on Sunday 7 July 2024 in the Ta' Xhajma circuit, in Nadur, Gozo.

Aidan Buttigieg finished first in the Elite Category when he dominated finishing his 12th lap in a time of 1:26:19.04, five minutes ahead of John Camilleri of B'Kara St Joseph SC (1:31:14.01). Pierre Borg of Mosta CC finished in third place (1:34:18.26).

The Women's race resulted in another dominated by Jessica Pratt of Team Greens when she finished the 8 laps first in a time of 1:03:20.95, an impressive lead of four more minutes over her partner Diana Muscat (1:07:59.39). Marie Claire Aquilina also from Team Greens finished third (1:13:24.80).

Luke Borg of The Cyclist - Agones won the Under 23 Category where he finished the 12th lap in a time of 1:31:18.88. Jacob Schembri of Mosta CC (1:31:29.15) and Clyve Chetcuti of Mosta CC (1:33:53.04) finished behind him respectively.

In the Masters 40+ Category, the winner was Luis Joaquin Rojas Guzman of Team Greens when he finished the 8 laps in a time of 1:02:15.92. Mark Zammit of Mosta CC finished behind him (1:05:15.78). Joseph Caruana of Team Greens for his part won the Masters 50+ Category in a time of 1:19:13.92.

Kai Azzopardi of The Cyclist-Agones won the Junior Category when he finished his six laps in a time of 47:39.61, while Ryan Gatt also of The Cyclist-Agones won the Under 16 Category Male when he finished his four laps in a time of 32:07.60. Goban Gao of Mosta CC won the Under 14 Boys Category in a time of 16:26.71. Jake Refalo of Shamrock Stars (16:26.76) and Ethan Grech of Mosta CC (16:28.21) finished behind him respectively. Zia Fuji of Shamrock Stars won the Girls' Under 14 Category when she did her two laps in a time of 17:48.81. Nina Debono also of Shamrock Stars finished behind her (25:55.46).

Ethan Cumbo of Mosta CC won the Under 12 Boys Category when he completed his lap in a time of 09:04.37. Kruiven Farrugia of Shamrock Stars (09:42.23) and Olivier Bucchieri of Gozo CC (09:47.27) finished behind him respectively. Amy St John of Mosta CC won the Under 12 Girls Category when she completed her lap in a time of 12:01.76.

The presentations were made by Edward Said, Mayor of Nadur, assisted by senior officials of the same Maltese Cycling Federation, John Zammit and Joe Bajada, President and Secretary General of the Maltese Cycling Federation.

At the end of these Championship races, the Maltese Cycling Federation wants to show its appreciation to all the cyclists and club officials for their participation, as well as to the ARRTS Timing System for their work. Thanks also go to the respective services of the Local Councils, Trasport Malta, the Police, LESA and the Emergency First Response, as well as some volunteers, timekeepers and marshalls.

Photos Credit: Alessio Sultana (Nadur Local Council) Sent by Joe Bajada

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