

THE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA

MALTESE NEWSLETTER



BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN MALTESE ALL OVER THE WORLD

Special Christmas Edition 2015



Il-Milied Jt-Tajjeb

Nixtiequ l-qarrejja taghna u l-familji taghhom
il-Milied Hieni

Grazzi tas-sapport, hbiberija u mhabba
mill-editur ta' din il-gazzetta tal-Maltin

Merry Christmas

We wish all our readers and their families
a very happy and Holy Christmas
Thank you for your support, friendship and love
from the Editor of
The Maltese Newsletter
Journal of the Maltese Diaspora
Frank L Scicluna



NEXT ISSUE: **ANOTHER SPECIAL EDITION - NEW YEAR 2016**

DREAMING OF A MALTESE CHRISTMAS



expensive and most people couldn't afford them. So people started making their own 'pasturi' from rough clay and plaster. Some of these figures still exist today. (Modern pasturi are now often made of plastic.)

By the early to mid 20th century, cribs were thought of as old fashioned and not very popular anymore. To stop the decline of Christmas, in 1907, a priest called George Preca founded children's charity and society called 'MUSEUM'. In 1921 he started a tradition of having a Christmas Eve procession with a life size figure of the Baby Jesus being carried at the head of the procession.

At sunset on Christmas Eve in 1921, Fra Diegu Street in the town of Hamrun was crowded with children and adults ready to take part in the first procession. In those days, street lighting was very poor in Malta and so many people brought lanterns with them to help them see their way during the procession and to shed light on the statue of Baby Jesus carried shoulder-high by four boys. The different types of lamps included, gas powered bicycle headlamps, oil lamps used on farmer's carts, coloured paper lanterns, Venetian lights, palm fronds and olive branches. The idea became very popular with people of all ages and so the very special Maltese traditional started. These processions are still popular today and form part of the Christmas Eve celebrations.

In 1986 the 'Friends of the Crib' society was formed and now they have over 500 members. Every year, in the weeks running up to Christmas, the Friends put on an exhibition of about 100 cribs of all shapes and sizes.

Maltese houses are often also decorated with cribs with 'pasturi' (which are small plastic or clay figures representing figures like the shepherds and angels). Large figures of the baby Jesus are sometimes put behind windows or in balconies and lit at night. Houses are also decorated with Christmas wreaths, candles and all sorts of other decorations. Every household also has a Christmas Tree decorated with light bulbs, tinsel and Christmas decorations.

Christmas is very important to the people of Malta and its sister Island of Gozo. Most people on Malta are Catholics and go to a Midnight Mass. Usually the churches are full with people.

In Maltese Happy Christmas is 'Il-Milied it-Tajjeb'. The Churches are decorated with lights and nativity cribs, 'Presepu', built by the church go-ers. The cribs are decorated with figurines, called 'pasturi' (representing figures like the shepherds and angels). Today some of the cribs are mechanical and the in them figures move! The figure of the baby Jesus is put on the main altar at midnight on Christmas night. At epiphany it is traditional to put the three figures of the Magi in the crib. There is a group on Malta called 'Friends of the Crib' who help to keep the Maltese crib tradition alive.

Cribs were first introduced into Malta from Italy by rich noblemen. They were not popular at first and most were burnt. The first true Maltese crib is believed to have been made in Malta in 1617 and was displayed in the Dominican Friars Church in Rabat. In St Peter's Monastery in Mdina, there is a crib dating back to 1670. This is treasured and looked after by the Benedictine Nuns who live in the monastery. At about the same time, another Maltese man made a crib with moving parts powered by water! As cribs became more popular they also became more 'Maltese' with people replacing the Italian looking buildings and trades people with local ones. (Flour windmills were and are still popular buildings to feature in a crib scene.) The first imported Italian 'pasturi' were very

It is traditional to sow wheat, grain and canary seed, 'gulgubiena', on cotton buds in flat pans five weeks before Christmas. These are left in dark corners in the house until the seeds produce white grass-like shoots. The pans with the fully-grown shoots are then used to decorate the crib or the statue of Baby Jesus.

One Maltese Christmas tradition is the 'Priedka tat-Tifel' which means 'the preaching of the child'. A boy or a girl normally aged 7 to 10, does the preaching of the sermon at the midnight mass instead of the priest! The children learn the sermon by heart and start learning it four or five weeks before they preach on Christmas Eve. The parents are also very excited and nervous about the performance, as they would have helped the children to learn the sermon. The boy or girl tells the story of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and is encouraged to give their sermon a personal delivery which will touch the hearts of the churchgoers.

George Sapiano delivered the first known Christmas Eve sermon by an altar boy in 1883, in the parish church of Luqa. It has also become common for local churches to organise a mini-pageant with children dressed up as shepherds, Joseph and Mary carrying a baby doll (representing Jesus) acting out the story of the Nativity. This re-enactment starts at 11pm and is followed by High Mass at midnight.

A popular Maltese carol is 'ninni la tibkix izjed'. It means 'sleep and cry no more' and was written by the Jesuit Priest, Fr. Andrew Schembri (1774-1862) from Luqa for Maltese migrants in Tunis. See some photos of Maltese Christmas Cribs by Salvatore Debono (goes to another site).

There is a village in Malta called 'Siggiewi' dedicated to St. Nicholas, who is also known as San Niklaw, of Bari in Italy and its feast is celebrated on the last Sunday of June.

Children in Malta get their presents from Santa Claus on Christmas night. Sometimes, Father Christmas comes knocking at doors early on Christmas night delivering presents!

Schools in Malta often hold a Christmas concert. Most of the children take part. It consists of Christmas Carols, plays with a Christmas theme,

mimes and poetry recitals, etc. It is enjoyed by the children and teachers alike. Christmas parties are also often held in each class. Sometimes the children bring over food which their parents prepare at home and which is shared with every one in their class. Gifts are exchanged and sometimes money is collected which is then given to charity.

A concert and Christmas party is held every year at the Residential Home for the Disabled in Siggiewi. The residents take part in Christmas plays and carol singing helped by the people who work who work in the Home including Nuns. The Home is decorated and the atmosphere is great. The chapel is decorated with a beautiful crib with Baby Jesus. On Christmas Eve, a procession with the Baby Jesus is held and then Midnight Mass. Relatives of the residents also participate in the Christmas celebrations. Special food is prepared and the atmosphere is very happy!

Voluntary organisations also organise Carol Singing evenings in old people's homes and hospitals, helping to cheer up the elderly and sick with the spirit of Christmas.

Under the patronage of the President of Malta, the Community Chest Fund sets up a tent in Freedom Square in the town of Valletta, where volunteers help to raise donations of cash. The donations are then distributed to charity organisations such as orphanages and other charities, which often rely on donations to continue their work in the community.

Maltese people have a wide range of food at Christmas. Traditionally, the Maltese housewife kept the fattest rooster, 'hasi', especially for Christmas Lunch, which was roasted at the local bakery in a casserole full of potatoes and vegetables. The traditional desert served at Christmas was the Treacle Ring, 'Qaghqa tal-Ghasel', and to finish it off, a hot Chestnut and Cocoa Soup, 'Imbuljuta tal-Qastan', which was and is served as a cosy night cap during the cold December days in Malta (see pictures above).

Today the traditional Maltese menu has made way for Christmas Turkey, Christmas Cakes, Christmas Puddings and Mince Pies, all inherited during 164 years of British rule (1800 – 1964) in Malta. Italian Panetone has also become a Christmas favourite.

Il-Grotta tal-Mużew ta' Lina Brockdorff - Malta

Kont għadni tifla żgħira
nitgħallem il-Mużew,
rbaħt grotta f'lotterija,
fraħt biha din tassew.

Dawwartha b'ħafna xemgħa,
għalbiena u ranċis.
Kewkba qasqast tal-fidda,
weħhiltha fuq precis.

Ġew fuqna l-jiem qerrieda;
tfuliti ntemmet hemm,
taħt trab, duħħan u bombi,
maħsula kollha demm.

Jum minnhom messet lilna
ix-xorti ta' l-oħrajn;
darna ma baqgħetx wieqfa,
Hwejjina mas-saqajn

Xi nies ta' qalbhom twajba
xxabtu mal-ħitan,
ħarġulna x'erba' lbiesi,
xi mejda u sufan

Fost dawk li huma ġabru
kien hemm iċ-ċkejken għar;
waqgħu kienu l-pasturi,
il-baqra u il-ħmar.

Farfartha u ħadtha miegħi
f'qigħ xelter, hemm ġo ħajt.
l-għadu le jerġa' jsibha
il-grotta li kont qlajt.

Is-snin u l-ġranet gerrbu,
illum għandi l-ulied,
b'dankollu bqajt ingħożżha,
il-grotta tal-Milied.

Għad hemm iċ-ċkejknha
grotta,
l-istess li irbaħt jien.
Hemm għadhom il-pasturi,
wara dal-bosta snin.

Għad hemm xemgħa u
għalbiena,
tal-fidda l-kewkba ssib.
Għakemm tidher tant fqajra,
grotta oħra qatt ma ngib.

Għax waqt li nduru magħha
b'għajnejna jleqqu sew,
tfuliti nerħa' nilmaħ,
fil-grotta tal-Mużew.



**CHRISTMAS IS A PERFECT
TIME TO STOP AND
REMINISCE – TEUMA FAMILY**

About the many hours we've spent discussing that and this The laughs, the smiles that we have known The wonderful things we've done. That make the family and friends that we share

A very special one! Have a very special Christmas, to our family and friends, The wish is old, The wish is true,

A merry Christmas, My family and friends, to you. It means so much To keep in touch ...with special family and friends like you.

Let us keep Christmas, holding it close to our hearts... for its

meaning never ends and its spirit is the warmth and joy of remembering family and friends... Merry Christmas and every happiness in the New Year 2016 to us means a special occasion when we can express our sincere thanks to those whose family and friends we cherish. May you all have a wonderful, joyous time.

To our family and friends. From Danny And Carmen Teuma and family.



Vetch (gulbiena) as Christmas decorations. A tradition in Malta.

Vetches (Gulbiena or Gurbiena) are grown in Malta to be used as a Christmas decoration. Malta is a tiny island in the middle of the Mediterranean sea that is very religious as a country. For the Maltese people, amongst the most important Christmas decoration is the crib, which represents the grotto in which baby Jesus was born. According to the ancient Maltese tradition, light deprived vetches is grown over a period of a few weeks and placed next to the statue of the baby Jesus in the manger. This is done to decorate the crib. Over the years, gulbiena was used as a more generic Christmas decoration and is used to decorate houses and churches

over the Christmas period.

Light deprived vetches grow white and stringy and can also be used for crafts. An example would be growing it as hair or a beard for a toy figure. Vetches are fast growing so they can be used to introduce young children and toddlers to plants.

Submitted: J. Falzon



ABOVE QAGHAQ TAL-GHASEL

YUMMY TREACLE-HONEY RINGS

These Traditional Maltese sweet pastry rings are filled with a treacle mixture. Although named honey rings - these are made out of treacle and not honey



BELOW IMBULJUTA TAL-QASTAN (MALTA)

Heaven exists, and it can be found in this cocoa-chestnut soup.



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Affiliated Associations

ABN

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Central Coast Maltese Social & Recreation

Club

George Cross Falcons Club of

Wollongong

Cittadini Cultural & Theatrical Association

Hamrun Association (NSW) Ltd

PRESIDENT Emanuel Camilleri JP

Maltese Bowlers Social Group NSW

Maltese Cultural Association of NSW

Maltese Past Pupils & Friends of Don Bosco

Parramatta Melita Eagles Sports

Club

Maltese Welfare (NSW)

SECRETARY Josephine Bigeni JP

Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day

Committee Our Lady Queen of

Peace Maltese Band

St Nicholas Festa Committee

Xaghra Association NSW

TREASURER George Bartolo JP



The President and Committee of the Maltese Community Council of NSW wishes to thank you for your generous support throughout the year. We also wish you and your family a Happy & Holy Christmas and a prosperous New Year

Emanuel Camilleri JP President MCC of NSW

MORE GOOD WISHES FROM OUR READERS, FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

- Thank you so much for your good wished for a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New year! Thank you also for the wonderful Newsletter which keeps us in touch with Malta and the Maltese all over the world! Georgina u Reg Scillio - VICTORIA
- From Joe Cutajar –freelance journalist- Malta
- Hello! Frank, thanks very much for sending me the Maltese Newsletter, I enjoy reading it immensely. It is very informative and very well written. Vince Camilleri Victoria
- We wish you and your family a Happy, Holy Christmas and a most Blessed New Year! Mum and I look forward to next year's newsletters too. Thanks for always keeping us so well informed in matters Maltese and international. Kind Regards, The Norton Family – South Australia
- Dear Frank May I wish you and our family a very happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year. Keep up the good work you are doing for the Maltese Community in Australia especially by publishing that very informative "Maltese Newsletter" which gives us the opportunity to learn and find out the latest happenings of our dear country. Best regards Dr. Victor Chircop-Sullivan
- Claudine Abela and Salvu Fenech - Adelaide SA
- Connie and Charles Vidal – Parafield Gardens SA
- Wishing all our friends in the Maltese Queen of Victories Band of South Australia a very happy and holy Christmas and a new year filled with peace, heralth and Happiness – Agnes and Ron Borg
- Milied it-tajjeb u risq u barka fis-sena l-għdida, Clemente, Mary & Zammit Family, Victoria
- Dear Mr Scicluna I am a third generation Maltese Australian, recently my grandmother has been emailing me the newsletter, but I have lost the past few issues and I was wondering if I could be added to the mailing list and if you could send me the most recent 4 or 5 issues? I am interested in the scholarship advertised as well as generally reading the very interesting newsletter. Many thanks, Craig Whittingham
- Anna and Alfred Flask – ACT

ALL THE NEWSLETTERS ARE DOWNLOADED AT www.ozmalta.page4.me

NATIONAL AWARDS BESTOWED ONTO MALTESE CITIZENS ON REPUBLIC DAY INCLUDING CHARLES N MIFSUD FROM NSW



would like to see a new year in the life of the republic which was more ethical, more equitable, and more just for all.

"In spite of all the progress in the field of equality there is much more to be done for women in Malta to be more present and visible," she said. "With a stronger presence of women in managerial posts, our country would be able to make decisions that respect interests of our population."

"We still have too many children, young people and adults who do not view education and training as an integral part of life." Children and youths need to be heard, she said. "I encourage Parliament to put in place the necessary legislation that would give Maltese children the means to become effective citizens."

The awards were presented as follows: *Order of Merit* - Carmel Agius, Joseph Sammut, Lord Marland, Kyle Balda, Frank Baldacchino, Benny Borg Bonello, Roger Ellul-Micallef, Hector Galea, Ray Mahoney, Peter Vassallo, Tony Zarb, Pierfrancesco Vago;

Medalja ghal qlubija - Karl Curmi (The 10-year-old rescued a baby who fell into the sea and almost drowned).

Medalja ghal-Qadi tar-Repubblika - Charles Coleiro, Bjorn Formosa, Vitorin Galea, Michael Grech, Joyce Guillaumier, Charles Mifsud, MOAS, Mario Ccerri, Winning team of the junior eurovision 2015, Alfred A. Zarb, Horst Brandstatter.

The Editorial team of the Newsletter would like to congratulate Charles N Mifsud for such an honour and recognition of his unselfish work towards the Maltese community in Australia for these last 55 years. Charles is also a great supporter of the commemorative book MALTA AND THE ANZACS – THE NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN and of THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER – THE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA. WELL DONE, CHARLES

WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

From: Andreas-Konstantinos Gouras – Consul-General of Greece in South Australia and the Consular Corps of SA

Celebrating Christmas the Aussie expat way



by Emily Banyard – AN Aussie in London UK

just how many great pubs in London put on a roast and festive atmosphere.

Grab a few friends and head down. Just remember, it's not Christmas unless you're all wearing ridiculous paper hats – so don't forget the crackers. Why not lead up to the day with a '12 pubs of

Christmas' pub crawl. There are many websites outlining fun seasonal crawls.

Dear Frank, THANK YOU very much for your kind greetings and best wishes. We also wish for you Peace and many blessings in this Christmas season and throughout the New Year of 2016. Thanking you also for the wonderful newsletters you have sent us throughout this year, always packed with news, interesting articles and amazing pictures. It is obvious that a great deal of time and effort is afforded to producing these newsletters and for this we would like to show our appreciation.

Warm regards and best wishes, Maria and Alfred De Carlo

- Mrs Imelda Bianco – Melbourne – Melbourne
- Missionary Society of Saint Paul – Victoria
- Mr Agostino Bianco – Victoria
- F. Saliba and family - Gozo
- Fr. Gabriel Micallef OFM Maltese Chaplain SA
- Joe and Doris Agius – Victoria
- Antionett Mascari and family NSW
- Joe and Doris Grima Greystanes NSW
- Marie and Robert Charbert Azzopardi SA
- Rosalie Rivetts UK
- Hon Grace Portolesi, Multicultural and ethnic Affairs Commission SA

You've had a great summer full of travel and fun with friends, now the cold is settling in and you're wondering what to do for Christmas.

With no sun, sea, sand or seafood — here's a quick guide to a few ways to celebrate the festive season in the big smoke (where there'll be no smoke but hopefully some snow).

There's something uniquely fun about a bunch of Aussies tackling the turkey and attempting all the trimmings the way 'mum used to' or whinging in unison about the lack of flame-grilled prawns. My first Christmas in the UK, a rouge bunch of friends lamenting our summer tans tripped down to Tesco and stocked up. You can quite cheaply pull off a quite hefty Christmas meal if you buy everything from the supermarket.

A few pointers; make sure you check on the turkey a few times to make sure it's not going to end up in flames, overstock on the mulled wine, cue the cheesy 'Christmas playlist' on internet radio, wear a bad taste Christmas jumper where possible, Skype your family before you get too drunk (remember they'll be relatively sober by that point) and listen to the Queen's Royal Christmas message on tele before switching to JJJ when you start feeling nostalgic.

For those who'd rather not get their hands dirty bothering about the best way to tackle a turkey, why not head to the local pub. You'd be surprised



Stedina

Il-Fathers ta' Stanley Street

East Sydney

jistiednu lill-kommunita Maltija **ghac-celebrazzjoni tal-Milied,**
nhar il-Hamis 24 ta' Dicembru 2015

fil-Kappella ta' San Pawl

De Piro House 19 Stanley Street East Sydney
Fil-11.30 pm nibdew il-kant u xi ghanjiet tal-Milied,
immexija minn

Fr Claude Borg MSSP u John Beale.

F'nofs il-lejl tibda l-quddiesa 'koncelebrata.

fejn ikun hemm il-priedka tal-Milied bil-Malti, min **Joy Decelis.**

Wara kulhadd huwa mistieden ghal kikra kafe` jew te` bhas-soltu.

Dawk li jkunu jrridu xi nformazzjoni, għandom icemplu lil

Fr Tarcisio Micallef MSSP fuq: 9380 8398.

- F'isem il-Fathers Maltin, Fr Tarcisio Micallef jixtieq il-Milied qaddis, barka u sena gdida 2016, mimlija b'hena wrisq, waqt li jirringrazzja lil kull ikkopera mas-Socjeta Missjunarja ta' San Pawl u s-sacerdoti Maltin, b'xi mod jew iehor, matul is-sena 2015.

Grazzi lill Media Maltija tal-appogg.

Rev Fr Tarcisio Micallef MSSP

Chaplain for Maltese Community Archdiocese of Sydney.

THE KURNELL NATIVITY SCENE – NEW SOUTH WALES



Joe 'il-Mosti' Deguara New South Wales

Dear friends and family, once again The Kurnell Nativity Scene "il-Presepju" is opened to the public to visit on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights from 7.00 p.m. till 10.00 p.m. or for Group visits to suit the group by appointment by contacting Joe on 0408 966 877. As in previous years there is something new added to the "Presepju", anyone is welcome to visit this magnificent Maltese tradition. .
Regards

MILIED TA' EMIGRANT

(Music Joe Tanti/Lyrics Treveor Zahra)

Go din l-art barranija

L-ispirtu tal-Milied

Jinhass ma' kull fejn thares

Got-toroq ta' l-Ibliet;

Bid-dawl u t-tizjin taghha,

Dil-Belt bhal genna ssir

F'din l-art, il-Milied tagghom

Jiccelebrawh bil-kbir!

Izda....Il-bjuda tal-gulbiena ma sibthiex

Ir-riha tan-narcis ma xammejthiex

Il-priedka tat-tfajjel ma smajthiex;

Tal-Muzew il-purcissjoni ma rajthiex

Il_kaghak ta' l-ghasel ma doqthomx

Il-hbieb u l-qraba m'ghannaqthomx

X'jiswewwli dal-festi sbieh u kbar

La darba ninsab 'il boghod mid-dar?

Il-hwienet bir-rigali,

In-nies tigri u ddur

Kulhadd jonfoq u jixtri

Kulhadd donnu sinjur;

U t-tfal kuntenti w hienja

Li jridu fis jixtruh,

Tassew ghall-grazzja t'Alla

M'hawn hadd li jbati l-guh

'Zda "Ninni la tibkix izjed" ma smajthiex

"Ninu Ninu tal-Milied" ma kantajthiex;

Id-dehra tal-presepju ma rajthiex

Il-mandolina tfuh ma xammejthiex;

It-twieqi bil-Bambini ma sibthomx

Il-hbieb u l-qraba m'ghannaqthomx

X'jiswewwli dal-festi sbieh u kbar

La darba ninsab 'il boghod mid-dar?

YULETIDE 'CROSS THE WORLD!

True friends, unique in life's brief journey,
 precious vibes aggenerate.
 Yonder from the distant vastness,
 mem'ries lief, reverberate.

Brief indeed th' encounter tarried.
 Will it pass our way again?
 Life 's a myriad wish left open,
 knowing not the why or when.

Merry Christmas IL-MILIED-TAJJEB © Roderick (Rigu) Bovington -

NINNI, LA TIBKIX IZJED –NINNI, GESU' BAMBIN



These are the opening stanzas of the very popular Maltese Christmas carol written by the Jesuit **Andrea (Indri) Schembri** in the second half of the nineteenth century for Maltese migrants who settled in North Africa. The melody was probably based on an already known older melody. The carol is always sung by children on Christmas Eve during the processions of the child Jesus organised by the Society of Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM). The following lyrics are taken from *Gemgha ta' Kliem Imkaddes* (Malta 1910) by Fr Andrea Schembri.

Il Benniena ta' Ġesu Bambin

*Ninni la tibkix iżjed, Ninni Ġesu Bambin,
Hallih għalina l-biki, Għax aħna l-midinbin*

Ejjew ejjew ja Anġli, Mis-sema mija, mija,
Taraw 'l Alla li ħalaqkom, Bambin ġewwa l-fisqija.
Ejjew, taraw b'għajnejkom lil dan Alla tal-ħniena,
Bambin sabiħ u ħelu, ininni ġol-benniena

Ninni, la tibkix iżjed.....

Hallu ragħajja ħallu, il-merħla tan-nagħgiet,
tibżgħux min jindokraham, Hemm l-Anġli tas-smewwiet.

Hallu, u ejjew taraw, Fil-Grotta l-ġid li ġiena;
Hawn Alla bambin ċkejken, ininni ġol benniena.

Ninni, la tibkix iżjed....



FRIENDS OF PROVIDENCE HOUSE NSW

CHRISTMAS 2015 FUND RAISING APPEAL

Id-Dar Tal-Providenza Malta, looks after over 100 residents with disability and requires over \$4 million annually which is raised through sponsors, activities and public donations.

The Friends Of Providence House NSW was founded in October 2011 and have so far raised over \$46,000. We are the official Ambassadors in Australia. Donations can be made at any Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY – *donations are acknowledged*

A/C Name : *Friends Of Providence House NSW*

BSB: 062-416 A/C No. 10199448

or contact the Co-Ordinator, Jim Borg (02) 9636 7767

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY



Cnr Main & Campbell Street, Blacktown. Contact
George Vella Tel (02) 9622 779

Celebrating Christmas in Canada

Singing Christmas Tree



The Central Pentecostal Tabernacle church in Edmonton, Alberta has produced "The Singing Christmas Tree" for nearly 30 years. At 35 feet high, the tree contains a choir of 125 and is illuminated with 4785 lights (courtesy Central Pentecostal Tabernacle Church). As Canada is quite a large country with many different people and cultures so is the celebration of Christmas. The population of Canada consists of nationalities such as English, German, French, Irish and Scottish which all had their influences on the ways of **celebrating Christmas** in this great country. Every region and province has its own traditions and specialties. For example Nova

Scotia is famous for its pine Christmas trees.

Mumminging – aka weird people acting spooky in costumes



In Nova Scotia and Newfoundland people put costumes on, knock on doors and ask in a fake voice whether there are any Mummers in the night and whether they are allowed in the house. After this unusual act the people in disguise sing and dance and get a slice of **Christmas cake** with a hot cup of something before they go to the next house. The host must guess who the Mummers are and if he does not guess right he must join the mummers. The mummers start their wandering around the 26th of December and they keep going until the 6th of January.

Sinck Tuck and Santa Clause



Some Canadians believe and proudly state that their country is the home of Santa Clause however the dwellers of Finland might disagree on this one. *Canadians* also give place to a festival called Sinck Tuck which was started by the Eskimos also known as Inuit. On this celebration the people dance and exchange gifts among themselves.

This fabulous *tradition* is mostly kept in Labrador City, Newfoundland where the people beautifully decorate their houses, put up some lights and many have a large ice sculpture in their yards as well.

Christmas sweets and baked goods



To the big family dinners the people of Canada bring many kinds of delicious cookies and sweets. Two of the most **traditional and popular** sweets are called Chicken Bones and Barley Candy which are made by local companies. Barley Candy is a Santa, snowman or reindeer shaped sweet on a stick while Chicken Bones is a candy which is pink and tastes just like cinnamon and has creamy chocolate in the middle.

To all our readers and friends in Canada and the USA – we wish them a Happy and White Christmas and BLISSFUL New Year 2016



Malta

Do you know who preaches the sermon at Midnight Mass instead of the priest on Christmas Eve in Malta?

It is a child aged between 7 and 10 years old. The child will be chosen from the altar servers months in advance and has to learn the 15 minute speech off by heart.

Once they have finished their sermon they are given a gift by the parish priest which is usually a statue of the baby Jesus lying in a manger.



Australia

What pulls Santa's sleigh around Australia instead of Reindeer?

Santa's sleigh is pulled by six white kangaroos!



CLUE

Australians sometimes call these animals "Boomers"...

IL-JUM INTERNAZZJONALI TAL-VOLONTARJAT 2015 U L-MIXEGHLA TAL-MILIED FIL-VICTORIA

Fl-okkażjoni ta' dan il-Jum, fid-Dar Karmni Grima l-Gharb nhar is-Sibt 5 ta' Dicembru 2015, l-NGO's Ghawdxin inghataw rikonoxximent għall-hidma li jwettqu matul is-sena b'risq il-gżira Ghawdxija. Din l-attività' organizzata mill-Kunsill tal-Organizzazzjonijiet mhux Governattivi Ghawdxin ippremjat lill-ghadd ta' NGO's Ghawdxin li kienu rappreżentati minn Pauline Camilleri, Chris Cassar, Fr Mario Cassar, Dr Joshua Grech, Joe Grima, Hilda Grima, George Sacco Xerri, Michael Tabone, Elaine Zammit Haber, Dame Carmen Bellamy, Eman Borg, Joe Camilleri, Komm. Charles Zammit, Marc Schembri, Ryan Mercieca, Charlene Debrincat, Adrian Formosa u Eric Joseph Grech. L-ghodwa fethet billi l-President tal-Kunsill tal-NGO's ta' merħba lil NGO's kolha u raddilhom hajt tax-xogħol volontarju li jwettqu u qal li ma jistax jara lil Ghawdex mingħajr il-preżenza tagħhom fil-hajja Ghawdxija.

Tal-istess fehma kienu s-Segretarju Parlamentari Dr Justyne Caruana u l-Ministru għal Ghawdex Anton Refalo li qassmu l-premjijiet. Wara li n-Nutar Joelle Grima qara r-rapport li fih habbar li l-GTA kienet intagħżlet bhala l-aqwa NGO. il-Ministru Refalo ippreżenta lil Paul Scicluna, il-President, trophy tassew sabiha u artistika tal-kristall bħal apprezzament għall-hidma bla ma taqta' li qed twettaq din l-NGO favur Ghawdex.

Ha sehem it-Torelli Duo li żewwaq il-programm b'siltiet muzikali minn xogħlijiet ta' John C. Morrissey, Herbert L. Clarke u Peter Graham. Ippreżenta l-Programm l-Kav Joe M Attard.

Intant dak inhar stess fil-ghaxija, fi Pjazza Indipendenza Victoria, il-Ministru għal Ghawdex xeghel is-Sigra tal-Milied f'nofs dan il-misrah ewlieini kif ukoll id-dwal matul Triq ir-Repubblika Victoria u nieda programm shih tal-Milied ma' Ghawdex kollu biex niesna jkollha fejn tidddeverti u tifrah f'dawn il-jiem gheziez wara li ppresieda għal programm tal-Milied li fih hadu sehem zewg korijiet tat-tfal u prezentazzjoni ta' kartolina tal-Milied mir-Rettur ta' Pinu Dun Gerard Buhagiar. Il-Kav Joe M Attard qara l-poezija tieghu tal-Milied Hodie Christus Natus Est.

KAV JOE M ATTARD GHAWDEX, MALTA

TO THE READERS OF THE NEWSLETTER

The Joy of Christmas is not for a day or a season. It is an eternal joy, a joy that no one can take from us because it is the joy of Jesus Christ himself made present in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. With lots of love

From Sr. Vittoriana Debattista and Community - Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heat Lockleys South Australia Dec. 2015

**Our dear readers send their best wishes to THE MALTESE DIASPORA
IT'S LIKE ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS TOGETHER**

THE PRESIDENT OF THE MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NSW



As the new President of the Maltese Community Council of NSW let me take this opportunity to wish all our community members a safe, joyful and happy Christmas.

Christmas not only is a holy time for many members of our community it is a time to share with family, friends and other community members. I also hope that it is a meaningful time for everyone and allows you time to reinvigorate and refresh for 2016.

Christmas is a time when we need to reflect on our achievements, hopes and aspirations for the year. It is also a time when we should think about others and allow ourselves to show compassion for those in the community who might be struggling this year. Reach out to those who are lonely

missing a loved one, greet a neighbor, or hug someone special. For all of us as a community, we celebrate the birth of baby Jesus and follow Christmas traditions we grew accustomed with.

This year has seen a great change with the election of new committee and a new president and the year has been a steep learning curve for me and I'm sure other committee members have also been working hard to understand many different projects, services and issues we have created

I and all committee wish all community members a peaceful, meaningful and joyous Christmas and New Year. I also hope that the New Year will bring new challenges and we are able to see a continued growth in our organization and continued hope for the MCC. Once again have a great Christmas and a **relaxing time over the New Year.**

EMANUEL CAMILLERI JP Christmas 2015

- ✿ *Dear Frank, Sincere thanks for your great effort to present to us amazingly beautiful and informative Newsletters. We take this opportunity to wish you and your family A very happy Christmas and a New Year filled with joyous occasions, Good Health and God's Blessings. Maria and Armando Catania#*
- ✿ *Grazzi dejjem tal-ħidma tagħkom Hu dejjem pjaċir naqra dal-magazzin! Nitgħallem minnu jien ukoll. Tislijiet u xewqat mikn qalbi għal Milied hieni u Sena ġdida kollha saħħa (qabel kollox!) hena, u ġid lilkom u lil familji kollha tagħkom. Saħħa dejjem Paul P. Borg - Malta*
- ✿ *Hello Mr.Scicluna Your newsletters are always very welcome and I take the opportunity to forward on to other Maltese who do not receive the reports direct. I also send them to my Australian mates who love them. Regards, Leo Brimmer Melbourne Victoria*
- ✿ *Christmas greetings to you – Fr. Norbert Bonavia MSSP – Gozo, Malta*
- ✿ *Chris Borg – Sydney -CB Travel Adventures Tel: (02) 9622 5779*
- ✿ *Christmas greetings to all. Regards Jessie and John Borg*
- ✿ *Sincere thanks for all your hard work and sheer dedication to the wonderful work that you do right through the year. This is a Christmas message to you, your family and all the readers of the Maltese Newsletter. JB*
- ✿ *Best wishes to all for the Christmas Season. May you all enjoy a happy and a holy Christmas May the New Year bring peace, joy, good health and abundant blessings Best regards to all. Testa Family – sevenChildren, 16 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren, Frank, Carmen Testa OAM, MQR.*
- ✿ *Dear Frank I wish you a most Holy Christmas to you , your family and all editorial staff and thanks for your wonderful work. Best wishes Victor Pullicino.*
- ✿ *A very happy Christmas And happy new year 2016 Thank for your Newsletter to send my. it is very interesting . God bless you and your family. The Azzopradi family - WA*
- ✿ *Hope and pray that you are well. Thanks for the newsletter that you regularly sent. It is very interesting and informative. Fr. John Taliana MSSP*
- ✿ *Ghaziz Frank, grazzi tax-xewqat u ahna napprezzaw u nirreciprokaw. Grazzi u apprezzamanet tax-xoghol tieghek matul is-sena. Paul u Salvina Vella – Melbourne Victoria*
- ✿ *Thanks for your beautiful Journal, very popular and informative and wishing you a very Happy and Holy Christmas . Maryann Belli Melbourne.*

- We wish to send our CHRISTMAS GREETINGS and our very best wishes for the NEW YEAR 2016 to all our family, relations and friends here in Australia and Malta. Especially to my dear friend Joe Mercieca and his family of Marsaskala in Malta - Joe, Carmen Chetcuti and family of Kilburn South Australia
- Prosit Mr. Scicluna really enjoy reading the wonderful Newsletter I find it very interesting and informative, I always look forward to the next edition. Wish you and your family a merry Christmas & a prosperous 2016
- Thank you & please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further assistance. Kind regards
- It is always a pleasure to receive the Maltese Newsletter- The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora. The whole family looks forward to it to read the many informative articles. Since we have been receiving your newsletter we learned a lot about Malta. Saliba family,
- Victoria Joe Borg Director First National Real Estate Borg & Associates
- Emmanuel and Theresa Camilleri and family NSW
- Very best wishes to you both . May 2016 be special, Dr Francis and Sally PARNIS Adelaide SA
- Annemarie and Lawrence Caruana Adelaide SA
- Blue Grotto Maltese Program EBIFM SA
- Carmen Galea Toronto Canada
- Charles and Jessie Mifsud NSW
- Fr. Noel Bianco – Blacktown New South Wales
- Fr. Norbert Bonavia MSSP, Gozo, Malta
- Garry and Miriam Jackson Adelaide SA
- Hon Jing Lee MLA South Australia
- Joe and Carmen Monsigneur- Adelaide SA
- Joseph and Catherine Sghendo Adelaide SA
- Louis Parnis, George Cross Club Wollongong
- Maltese Chaplaincy Festivities Group Adelaide
- Maltese Aged Care Association of SA Inc
- Maltese Community Council of NSWs
- Maltese Community Council of South Australia
- Maltese Community Council of Victoria
- Maltese Association of Western Australia
- Maltese Community Radio EBIFM SA
- Blue Grotto Maltese Program PBAFM SA
- Maltese Franciscan Sisters - Lockleys SA
- Maltese Guild of South Australia Inc
- Maltese Queen of Victories Band Inc
- Maltese RSL Sub branch of South Australia
- Senior Citizens Association of South Australia
- St Catherine Society of SA inc
- Society of Christian Doctrine – Adelaide SA
- Monte Dimech Adelaide SA
- Mrs Theresa Agius – Adelaide SA
- Peter and Maria Fisher Adelaide SA
- Ray and Josephine Bigeni – NSW
- Rebecca Galdies – Adelaide SA
- Salvina and Paul Vella, RESKEON Victoria
- Tara and Stephen McCormack Wagga NSW
- Alan C Borg, Malta
- BANK OF Valletta, Malta
- Carmen Baxter, NSW
- Carol Brown, Henley Beach, SA
- Chev and Mrs C. Farrugia – Adelaide SA
- Dr K. Chetcuti London UK
- Dr. George Boffa MD, NSW
- M and J Falzon, Adelaide SA
- Edgar and Anna Agius Adelaide SA
- George Brimmer, Victoria
- Harry and Josephine Zammit Cordina Malta
- Jessie Borg Adelaide Australia
- Joe and Josephine Borg, Adelaide SA
- Joseph and Myriam Pavia, Malta
- Joyce and Emanuel Tabone Adelaide SA
- Marika and Chris Fotiou Adelaide SA
- Mr. Joe Deguara – NSW
- Mrs L Brockdorff – Malta
- Nicholas Bonello, Malta
- R & N Lewis, Tasmania Australia
- Ray Xerri, Malta
- Sam and Theresa Abela, Toscana, Italy
- Sr. Giovanna Gauci, Rome, Italy
- The Camilleri family, USA
- Mary and Harry Bugeja, Adelaide SA
- Dolores Cristina, Malta
- Mr and Mrs H & J Borg – Adelaide SA #
- Charles Figallo and Staff at the Basetec Services SA
- Mr and Mrs M and G Hammond – Melbourne
- Tessie and Victor Mansueto SA
- Antoinette Mascari – NSW
- Fr. Tarcisio Micallef MSSP and community.
- Vincent Zammit Adelaide SA
- Dominican Sisters – Blacktown NSW



Just as different cultures celebrate their versions of the Thanksgiving holiday, there are also variances in the way other countries celebrate the Christmas season. In the United States, Christmas is celebrated by decorating buildings with festive lights, adorning Christmas trees with ornaments, exchanging presents between friends and family, and gathering at events such as Christmas parades.

It is hard to imagine the holidays being celebrated any other way, however holiday traditions take on many forms. Here are just a few of the varying types of Christmas celebrations that occur around the world.

- **Australia:** December 25th actually falls in the middle of summer vacation for Aussies. This means that a lot of Christmas festivities are celebrated outside, such as the famous Carols by Candlelight ritual. During this yearly tradition, celebrators gather at night under candlelight to sing their favorite Christmas carols.
- **France:** While celebrating the holiday season begins on December 5th in France, the most important day of celebration is actually Christmas Eve. Each December 24th, French citizens sing carols and church bells ring throughout the countryside. Christmas Day is reserved for church activities and feasting on their customary dish, buche de Noel, which is a cake filled with sweet buttercream.
- **Holland:** Just as the United States awaits the arrival of Santa Claus, the children of The Netherlands wait for Sinterklaas on December 6,

which is St. Nicholas Day. The story behind Sinterklaas is that the bishop travels by ship from Spain and brings presents to all the children. Families celebrate St. Nicholas Eve with a feast and a traditional "letter cake," which is a pastry shaped into the first letter of the family's last name.

- **China:** The Christmas tradition in Chinese is Sheng Dan Jieh, which translates to "Holy Birth Festival." Like the United States, families put up a Christmas tree and decorate it with lanterns and flowers. One of the biggest symbols of the Christmas season is red paper chains, which symbolize happiness.
- **Germany:** Germany is very cold in December, but that doesn't stop the Germans from celebrating the holidays. They make a traditional Advent wreath with four colored candles on forth Sunday before Christmas. Traditional food is made during the holidays, such as sweet loaves of bread, spicy cookies referred to as "lebkuchen," and cakes with fruits on the inside.
- **Sweden:** Christmas festivities in Sweden begin on December 13, which is referred to as St. Lucia's Day. Each year, the eldest daughter dresses up as the "Queen of Light" by wearing a long white dress and a crown of leaves. She then goes room to room to serve her family coffee and treats in bed.
- **India:** In October and November, Diwali is celebrated with parades, music, colorful lights, and firecrackers. Palm trees or mango trees are decorated with lights, and some attend Christmas Eve services that have plays, pageants, and/or speakers. One of the well-known "Christmas flowers," the poinsettia, grows wild in India and blooms in time for the Christmas season.

Christmas and holiday celebrations vary around the world, the one thing in common is that everyone wants to celebrate this feast of PEACE ON EARTH

We wish to thank

All the Maltese Missionaries (priests, nuns and lay people) in South America, Cuba, Pakistan, India and Albania who are doing sterling work in these countries and making Malta proud. THANK YOU. May you have a Joyful Christmas

PROFILE OF LUKE CAMILLERI – 2ND GENERATION MALTESE



From left, Luke Camilleri, Craig Zetter (head instructor) Sam Kuys.

Luke is a second generation Maltese Australian, the son of Andrew & Joan and the grandson of Vince & Terry Camilleri. Luke's father is a keen follower of the Barclays English Premier League, and a supporter of Liverpool Football Club. This has rubbed off on Luke at a very early age; consequently he became interested in playing the game.

Luke started playing soccer for his school (St. Kevin's) when he was 10 years old, and also started playing club soccer for Manningham when he was 11 years old. As a result he was playing two games every weekend for 6 years. A highlight of his playing career was scoring 8 goals in one game. He mainly played centre midfield, however he also had many games at both right wing and as a striker. When he was 14 years old he also decided to take up refereeing starting with the under 12's.

This meant that he was now playing two games and refereeing up to three games per week.

At 18 Luke completed year 12, and was soon to start studying Commerce and Law **at University**.

He stopped playing for Manningham and also for his school, to devote more time to his studies.

However he continued refereeing and in the intervening years he has progressed to his present level, refereeing the under 20's at National Premier League level.

Between September 28 and October 2 this year, Luke was one of four referees picked to attend the Boys National Youth championships in Coffs Harbour, NSW.

Four referees from the Football Federation of Victoria (FFV) Talent Pool Luke Camilleri, Andrew Meimarakis, Rhys Shelmerdine and Brandon Smith were selected to take part in the tournament.

Luke was awarded Referee of the tournament for refereeing the Under 13 boys. Lead assessor was former FIFA and A-League referee Craig Zetter.

During the season Luke was a panel member of the National Premier League Under 20's as well as being involved in the National Premier League seniors and FFA cup level.

FFA Director of Referees Ben Wilson said: "Most of the current A-League Referees Panel attended a National Youth Championships as part of their development. This illustrates the important role the tournament plays in developing the next generation of A-League referees." CONGRATULATIONS.



Josie and Frank Scicluna
wish you and your family
a Happy, Holy and Peaceful
Christmas

Peace on Earth

Consulate for Malta in South Australia

12 Camroc Ave, Prospect SA 5082

Email: honconsul@live.com.au

Nixtiequ lill-qarrejja taghna u l-familja tagghom Milied hieni u qaddis u sena gdida 2016 mimlija paci u barka ta' Gesu' Bambin



Warmest Season's Greetings

Hon. JING LEE MLC

Working for all
South Australians.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY NEW YEAR

*I very much value your
contribution and support
throughout the year!*

*Wishing you happiness, good
health and prosperity for the
festive season!*

*Look forward to working
with you in 2016!*

*Best Wishes for a Happy
and Rewarding Year!*

Jing, Family & Staff

*to Frank L. Scicluna OAM
and all the readers of
THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER*

The Honourable Jing Lee, MLC – Member of the Legislative Council
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for
Multicultural Affairs | Small Business | Investment and Trade
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SEND US YOUR COMMENTS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE – NEW YEAR 2016 SPECIAL