

**THE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA**

**MALTESE NEWSLETTER**

**BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN MALTESE ALL OVER THE WORLD**



**NEW YEAR'S EVE 2016 AT SYDNEY HABOUR**

**AT MELBOURNE -AUSTRALIA**



To all our readers, contributors  
and awesome friends of the  
**MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER**  
The Journal of the Diaspora



from  
Frank Scicluna and Team  
**Adelaide – South Australia**  
**2016**



## THE TREASURE ISLAND - MALTA

**Tea and history: Revel in marvellous Malta's sunshine, beauty and English heritage**

[Robert Lugg](#) writes

When I first visited Malta in the 1970s it was a place that seemed to lay somewhere between the Mediterranean and Miss Marple's St Mary Mead.

It was an island populated by a people who can trace their roots back to the Greeks and Phoenicians - the original movers and shakers of the Mediterranean. But thanks to 150 years of British control, which ended in 1964, in many ways it came to resemble 1950s Weybridge: Morris Minors, Leyland buses, afternoon tea and everywhere you looked: British red post boxes.

The centrepiece of my first trip, was a day at the races, an outing so time-warply British (cucumber sandwiches and fruit cake anyone?) that all it required was the discovery of a dead body in the shrubbery to provide a full Agatha Christie experience.

Other Mediterranean places have British heritage: Gibraltar, Cyprus and, albeit fleetingly, Menorca. But nowhere, you feel, has warmed to its British rulers as enthusiastically as the Maltese. It's not simply the skin-deep fondness for a cup of tea and a toasted tea cake, the Maltese firmly aligned themselves with Britain in the Second World War and paid an appalling cost for their unflinching loyalty.

I have returned several times to Malta and while the British heritage is each time a little less obvious, it continues to be an easy fit for the UK holidaymaker: a country where one of the official languages is English and where the welcome is always warm.

What always surprises me about Malta is how different it is as an island from other Mediterranean islands - it is quite different from nearby Sicily, for example. It's scenically unlike but dissimilar in other notable ways.

The Maltese language seems to have more in common with Arabic.

Malta is virtually in the heart of the Mediterranean, 55 miles from Sicily to the north and 160 miles north of Africa. It has been shaped by its contact with nearly all the major powers of Europe, Africa and the Middle East that have passed by (and the many races that have stayed).

One key attraction for holiday visitors is Malta's compactness: the three islands, Malta, Gozo and Comino, cover an area of 122 miles with a population of 400,000 (about the same as the city of Bristol). Malta is the largest and the cultural, commercial and administrative centre. Gozo is the second largest and is more rural, characterised by fishing, tourism, crafts and agriculture while Comino has one hotel and is largely uninhabited.

If it lacks anything, it is not a place for a beach holiday - but these days fewer people seem to want to spend their holiday days roasting in the sun. 'The Fortress City': Valletta, Malta's capital, is one of the Mediterranean's most impressive ports

And how can you be idle on Malta when there are so many interesting things to see and do? Valletta, Malta's capital and 'The Fortress City', is one of the Mediterranean's most impressive ports. It grew on the rock of Mount Sceberras peninsula, which rises steeply from two deep harbours, Marsamxett and Grand Harbour.

Construction of the town began in 1566, and Valletta, with its impressive bastions, forts and cathedral, was completed in just 15 years. Valletta is great for strolling around. The streets boast some of Europe's finest art works, churches and palaces. Side streets are full of quaint shops and cafes. Its rich mix of historical buildings in different styles has helped make Malta a honeypot for filmmakers.

More than 90 films have used it for filming in the past four years. It's been the location for a couple of Bond films (The Spy Who Loved Me and Never Say Never Again) and Midnight Express. But the film shot here that locals recall with most delight is the epic Gladiator (they built a fake amphitheatre near the harbour).

Malta has also been associated with some spectacular films. One of the most famous financial disasters was Raise The Titanic, much of whose underwater filming was done here. Producer Lew Grade's remark on the ruinous production costs was: 'Raise the Titanic? It would have been cheaper to lower the Atlantic.' Malta, meanwhile, is still on the up.





## Things That Are Undeniably True About The Maltese

No one can do sea, sand, sun, *and* food quite like us.

Concepta Cassar BuzzFeed



You can get anywhere really quickly. Because Malta is only 316 square kilometers, you're never more than 40 minutes away from the other side of the island. And everyone knows that good things come in small packages.

Which means you can fit a lot into one day. You can swim in the Blue Lagoon...grab some *ftira* in Valletta. Traditionally, these Maltese flatbreads are filled with some permutation of tomatoes, capers, and olives.



Yummy.... Timpana (baked macaroni)

View of St. Paul's Bay at sunset

And everyone thinks it's very original to nickname you "Malteser".



...take a stroll around St Paul's Bay...

...and still be back in time to have *timpana* with Nannu before he goes to the *kazin* (Club).

LAMPUKI – on demand (photo – left)

If you like pasta, and you like pie, you'll love timpana: layers of pasta in a rich Bolognese-style sauce, mixed with egg, and topped with a pastry crust.





You always want this before lunch.

But never without these.

You can only think of one thing when you see this.

You have to be careful not to eat too many of these.

*Bajtar tax-xewk* can be dangerous – just ask my *ziju*.

And you wish other people understood this.

*Fenkata*, anyone?

When making **fenkata**, the bonier parts of the rabbit are used to flavour a sauce served with spaghetti for the starter, while the other pieces are cooked in a stew, and served with good bread and potatoes.

Your language is unique to the island, which means you always have a secret code when you're abroad.

But you must remember to be careful at the airport.

English speakers can never tell if you're making a statement or asking a question.



This dog makes googling anything about your homeland more difficult than it needs to be.

This little terrier is convinced he's the only Maltese one out there.

But it's OK, because you're very laid back.

KINNIE – most popular soft drink on the island. You either love it or hate it. A soft drink made with Maltese bitter oranges and a blend of herbs, Kinnie is truly the taste of Maltese

summer

You have some of the best seasonal produce in the world.

Especially lampuki. But no matter what season it is, you always have time for this.





**Ħobż biż-żejt** just means “bread with oil”, but this dish is so much more. Delicious Ħobż tal-Malti bread is rubbed with tomatoes or *kunserva* (tomato puree), drizzled with olive oil, and then topped with **bigilla, onion, ġbejna, tuna, olives, and capers**. Hungry yet? And wherever you are in the world, you know that this tastes like home.

And didn't judge your enormous appetite for these.



Ah, *ġbejniet*! Traditional cheese made with milk from sheep or goats, *ġbejniet* can be prepared in a number of ways, including fresh (*friski* or *tal-ilma*), sundried (*moxxa, bajda*, or *t'Ġhawdex*), salt cured (*maħsula*) or peppered (*tal-bżar*). The peppered variety are often pickled or stored in oil. But you know that no one can resist these.

**Pastizzi** are dangerously delicious filo pastries filled with ricotta or curried peas. They are such a big part of Maltese culture that the word is used in several slang expressions. Just don't call someone one, or you might get into trouble!

**Luzzi (Maltese boat)** brighten up your day.

Your architecture is pretty fine. And with more churches per square mile than anywhere else in the world, there's a lot of it.



You're so courageous that your country is the only one in the world to have been awarded the George Cross for its bravery.

The victory was so sweet, they named a beer after it.

Your history is truly ancient.

We're talking megalithic, UNESCO World Heritage Site levels of ancient.



And no matter how small you are, you know you're beautiful.





## PROUD TO BE MALTESE



These are only a few of the many hundreds of emails we receive

✳️ This Newsletter is like a breeze of fresh-air, I call it "THE GOOD NEWS JOURNAL" Thanks for sending me regularly. Maria Calleja, Canada

✳️ Dear Frank Many thank you for such a wonderful newsletter. Loved reading the about the month of January explaining meanings of New Year. As a kid in Malta I remember getting money from my relatives and our parents friends but never

could understand why we really got money on New Year's and never presents at Christmas. This should happen here too and skip Christmas presents as it might bring back the meaning of Christmas. Loved the meaning of explanations of a friendship of a Maltese for life and why we speak so loud and why we cut each other out when we speak in conversation. My older son Aldo says, that when Maltese people talk with each other we should take a number like in Coles at the deli section and wait our turn HAHAAHAA.... It makes us all laugh. Many thanks and look forward to the next news letter Gary and Miriam Jackson SA

✳️ Hon Consul for Malta in South Australia. Thanking you for continuing to send the newsletter always full of interesting news and there is always something new to learn. I first received this newsletter when I was living in Italy. It has since followed me to Malta and which I share with a few others. I pray that this coming year will be a peace-filled and mercy-filled year for all of us. Sr Cecilia Schembri- Malta

✳️ This newsletter is a very effective way to bring the Maltese living and Malta and abroad together. As you always say – Building Bridges. I feel I am part of the Maltese family. Keep up the good work for our sake. Peter Gatt -Craigieburn VIC

✳️ Prosit hija l-ghaziz! In-Newsletter tieghek dejjem inxandarha ma' hbiebi malli nsib il-waqt. Roderick We hope you all had a blessed CHRISTMAS to you and your family Consul and a well deserved break. Warmest wishes Peter and Vicki Antoniou

✳️ Here's wishing you Peace, Prosperity, Good Health, Happiness & Joy in 2016 and thank you for the Journal of the Maltese Diaspora. Profs Steve Gatt

✳️ I like the Maltese Newsletter so much that I send it to all my friends and relatives in many parts of the world. I always look forward anxiously to receiving it. JB Borg NSW

✳️ We would like to THANK YOU for your support throughout the year. We look forward to seeing you again or working with you again in the New Year. Bonnie Lee Galea Adelaide - Web: <http://bonnieleegalea.com/>

✳️ Proset u nixtiequkom s-sena gdida mimlija hena paci u sliem. Greg Caruana

✳️ We wish you a healthy and joyful New Year. May 2016 be as successful in reaching out to the Maltese diaspora and educating all about the contributions and the culture of our heritage. What a wonderful bridge you build between the Maltese and the international community. I forward your Newsletter to many of my American friends many of whom had never heard of Malta until they met us. I especially enjoyed and forwarded the Christmas edition as it encapsulated the traditions, customs, and cuisine. May God continue to bless your work and thanks for all the interesting and informative newsletters.. Fred & Ida Aquilina Ir Razzett, Vacaville, CALIFORNIA USA

**I like it because it's completely free, non-political, positive and friendly, you always have a good word for everyone and you never put down your fellow Maltese. I send it to many others and they like it. JB Agius**



## Quintessence 29 – 31 JAN 16

SPAZJU KREATTIV THEATRE, ST JAMES CAVALIER Maltese experimental electronic musician and



composer Renzo Spiteri presents Quintessence Solo Performance, a live work of complex sound layers, a powerful narrative and an array of emotions. Premiered at The Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester (UK) in partnership with Future Everything Festival 2015, Quintessence is best described as an immersive experience that surrounds the audience with an alluring world of sound created through the use of sampling and live electronic manipulation, a large suspended metal sheet, a fishing line, vocal phrases, and a sculptural array of acoustic percussion instruments. Quintessence has been performed in Germany

and Holland and will be touring the UK in Spring 2016. *"The Maltese artist created an unparalleled sensitising atmosphere [...] Spiteri demonstrated an extraordinary talent for questioning the possibilities of the objects surrounding him and converting the insights gained into sounds. His performance demonstrated a singular, aesthetic fascination"* (From "Beauty in the Unknown", Benedikt Stegemann, Frankfurter Allgemeine, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015)

Quintessence is a Valletta 2018 and *Open Works Lab* collaboration and is part of the Valletta – European Capital of Culture 2018 Programme. It will be running at Spazju Kreattiv theatre, St James Cavalier from the 29th-31st January at 8pm. Tickets are available

- See more at: <http://valletta2018.org/events/quintessence/#sthash.D4Qcmkj0.dpuf>



### Love in Diversity' sculpture exhibition by Mario Agius

For his second personal exhibition Mario Agius is showing a series of sculptures inspired by various themes. 'Love in Diversity' is a showcase of both wood and stone sculpture in which Agius is expressing his love for capturing figurative and semi abstracted forms. Besides exploiting a variety of materials, Mario makes use of their particular features to enhance his expressionist renderings.

Many of his sculptures are inspired from mother and child, family and lovers themes and even human suffering and diversity. His expressionistic and almost primitive approach to the media is visible especially in his wood and weathered limestone sculptures.

Mario Agius( b.1956) has manifested a fond inclination to sculpture and design from his early years. He began his artistic studies under the late Mons. Michelangelo Apap and furthered his studies in wood sculpture under the famous Maltese artist Anton Agius. The artist has a number of sculptures in private collections both locally and abroad including in London, Switzerland, Germany and Australia. His finest wood sculptures adorn churches all around the Maltese Islands.

In 1989 he furthered studies in Cheltenham, England at the White Knight Gallery under the tuition of the international artist Ian Norbury. Mario has been actively taking part in various collective exhibitions both locally and away from Malta including those organized by the Members of the British Woodcarvers Association. Next July Mario will be exhibiting in Germany after being invited by the Marzi Art International Galerie of Hamburg. This solo exhibition illustrates works created by the artist to amalgamate together his past studies, past experiences and his inner feeling towards art. Thus this exhibition serves as a manifesto of the artist's inner soul. 'Love in Diversity' will be open for public viewing as from the 17th February till the 14th March, at art.e Gallery, one, Library Street, Victoria Gozo (Adjacent to St. Augustine Square).

Opening Hours are from Monday to Saturday from 9.30 till 12.15 while on Fridays it opens from 9.30 till 12.15 and 17.00 till 19.00. The artist can be contacted on 99472831 or by visiting his website [www.marioagius.com](http://www.marioagius.com).



### Christmas in Malta pictorial exhibition at the Lascaris War Rooms

A Pictorial Exhibition about Christmas in Wartime Malta 1939 – 1945, is being held at the Lascaris War rooms, Valletta, organised by Wirt Artna.

This exhibition charts the different aspects of five Christmases as experienced by the Maltese civilian population and the British garrison during the Blitz of 1940 – 43 and beyond.

The exhibition portrays the subject chronologically and includes lots of never-before-seen images from the time.

This exhibition is open until the 30th of January, and is ideal for both grown-ups and children and comes free with a normal entrance to the Lascaris War Rooms. for visiting hours etc. please visit

<http://www.lascariswarrooms.com/visitor-information>.

### Ggantija Temples receive Tourism Award from British Guild Travel Writers



The Ggantija Temples Interpretation Centre in Xaghra, Gozo has received a “Highly Commended” Tourism Award by the British Guild of Travel Writers.

Heritage Malta has said that announcement took place during the Guild’s annual awards dinner at the Savoy Hotel in London, and was received by Nicoline Sagona, Manager of Gozo Museums and Sites within Heritage Malta.

A “Highly Commended” award certificate confirms that the Ggantija Temples Interpretation Centre was one of the three finalists in its category of Best European Tourism Projects.

The project, which was managed by Heritage Malta – the national agency for museums, conservation practice and cultural heritage – was inaugurated in October 2013 and formed part of a much wider Archaeological Heritage Conservation Project (ERDF032). It was nominated for the Tourism Awards by British writer Juliet Rix, who is also a member of the Guild.

The 275 Guild members who voted, range from writers and editors to photographers and broadcasters, travel the world to see new tourism projects. Some projects cost millions and are well-publicised; others are simpler – but may have an even larger impact on their community.

The Ggantija project was nominated because of the strengths and successes it has presented within the local tourism industry. In Juliet Rix’s own words, the new interpretation has managed to combine “academic accuracy with completely accessible presentation,” and “has turned difficult-to-understand ancient stones into a window onto an extraordinary early people.”



### MALTESE TENOR - Nico Darmanin

NICO was born in Malta and studied in London at the Royal College of Music and the National Opera Studio. Maltese tenor Nico Darmanin is quickly making a name for himself in the Rossini and bel canto repertoires, having already made his debuts at the Royal Opera House (Daniéli Les Vêpres siciliennes) and Vlaamse Opera (Italian Tenor Der Rosenkavalier, dir. Christoph Waltz). He began his training with

soprano Gillian Zammit (a former pupil of Carlo Bergonzi), before moving to London to study at the Royal College of Music with Rosa Mannion and the National Opera Studio. Recent highlights include Almaviva Il barbiere di Siviglia



(Opera Holland Park); Ramiro La Cenerentola (Scottish Opera); Ottavio Don Giovanni (Vlaamse Opera); and Belfiore Il viaggio a Reims at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro.

Engagements in the 2013/14 season included two appearances at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Daniéli Les Vêpres siciliennes (in an Olivier-Award winning production directed by Stefan Herheim and conducted by Pappano) and as the Apparition of a Youth Die Frau ohne Schatten under Semyon Bychkov (in a new production by Claus Guth, which won the 2015 Opera Award for best Richard Strauss Anniversary Production). Darmanin also sang the Italian Tenor Der Rosenkavalier in Hollywood actor Christoph Waltz's first opera production for Vlaamse Opera, and a critically acclaimed Almaviva Il barbiere di Siviglia at Opera Holland Park. At the end of the season Darmanin studied on the Accademia Rossiniana in Pesaro with Maestro Zedda, after which he was selected to sing Belfiore Il viaggio a Reims at the Rossini Opera Festival.



*Joseph Calleja was joined on stage with aspiring Maltese tenors, Nico Darmanin and Cliff Zammit Stevens. August 2015 (Photo Chris Sant Fournier)*

Highlights of the current season include Ramiro La Cenerentola (Scottish Opera); Ottavio Don Giovanni (Vlaamse Opera); Handel's Messiah at the Royal Festival Hall; and Beethoven's Symphony No.9 at the Barbican Hall. Further ahead he will make his house debut in a major role for Welsh National Opera. Other operatic roles include Ferrando

Così fan tutte (Dubrovnik Arts Festival); Ernesto Don Pasquale and Don Ottavio Don Giovanni (both Westminster Opera Co.); Danieli Les Vêpres Sicilienne (Royal Opera House); Italian Sängers Der Rosenkavalier (Vlaamse Opera); Die Jüngling Die Frau ohne Schatten (Royal Opera House); Il Conte d'Almaviva (Opera Holland Park); and Belfiore Il Viaggio a Reims (Rossini Opera Festival). In concert, Darmanin's repertoire includes Romantic song and operas by Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Tosti, Fauré and Debussy. He has recently recorded a world premiere of Massenet songs with Richard Bonyngand, also under his baton, the tenor in Sullivan's Shore and Sea for Victorian Opera.

Darmanin has participated in masterclasses with Juan Diego Florez (in Pesaro) and Joyce DiDonato (at the Royal Opera House). He has also worked with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Sir Thomas Allen on the Solti Accademia di Bel Canto, and with Mirella Freni as part of the Cubec masterclasses in Modena. Darmanin is a Royal Overseas League Competition Finalist, Overseas Prize Winner and most recently a **BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Finalist 2015**.

## **Ninsabu fil-bidu ta' Sena Ġdida- 2016.....!**

Il-festi tal-Milied u tal-Ewwel tas-Sena għaddew ukoll u bdejna sena ġdida. Lili l-ewwel jum tas-sena, kull darba jgħibli memorji sbieħ għax kien fl-ewwel ġurnata tas-sena li twelidt. Issa toqogħdux tistaqsuni kemm għalaqt! Intant bdejt is-sena billi f'riġt għall-ikel mal-familja, biex infakkar din il-ġrajja f'ħajti. Meta nħares lura għandi għax niringrazzja 'l Alla li l-ġenituri tiegħi tawni trobbija tajba b'valuri u prinċipji li mexxewni fil-ħajja. Jalla din is-sena 2016 tkun għalina wkoll sena ta' paċi u saħħa u ta' għaqda bejnietna lkoll. Is-Slaten Maġi taw lit-tarbija

## **Kav Joe M Attard Victoria Għawdex**

divina r-rigali tagħhom u l-poplu tagħna matul il-jiem li għaddew, ta prova tal-ġenerożità tiegħu kemm fl-Istrina kif ukoll fil-ġbir b'risq il-familji fil-bżonn u d-Dar tal-Providenza. Issa hemm bżonn li nżommu dan ir-ritmu ta' għaqda u ġenerożità anke fil-gimghat u x-xhur li ġejjin sa ma jerga' jfeġġ fuqna Milied ieħor.

Mela ħalli nimxu pass pass. Bdejna Jannar u matul dan ix-xahar kiesaħ tas-sena nfakkru l-festa ta' Sant'Anton Abbati fix-Xagħra fejn insibu knisja

Ħelwa ddedikata lilu li tant toffri servizz tajjeb lil dawk li jgħixu madwar dawk l-inħawi bl-inizjattiva u l-insistenza tal-ħabib tiegħi Dun Gwann Sultana, saċerdot żagħżuġ li f'kull Milied jara kif joħloq tassew atmosfera sabiħa f'dawk l-inħawi. Rajna presepju ħelu u ħaj maġenb il-knisja fejn f'Jum il-festa tal-Qaddis, Patrun tal-annimali, issir Purċissjoni bis-sehem tal-Banda 'Victory', li fi tmiemha l-Isqof ibierek għadd kbir ta' pets li x-Xagħrin u tant Għawdxin jieħdu magħhom għall-okkażjoni. Jitqassam ukoll xgħir u ikel ieħor lill-annimali li huma ħolqien t'Alla u għalhekk għandna nħobbuhom u ma nħalluhomx jinħaqr u jew abbandunati.

Fl-24 ta' dan infakkru l-festa tal-Isqof ta' Ginevra u Patrun tal-Gurnalisti, Kittieba u Xandara, San Frangisk de Sales. Ta' kull sena **Mons Isqof Mario Grech**, l-Isqof t'Għawdex, iqaddes għall-gurnalisti, kittieba u xandara fil-knisja ħelwa tas-Sorijiet tal-Qalb ta' Gesu fi Triq Palma Victoria u jgħaddilhom messaġġ tal-okkażjoni. Wara jsib ukoll ħin biex bejn tazza kaffe u oħra jitkellem f'tit magħhom. Din l-attività hija organizzata mill-Għaqda Gurnalisti Għawdxin (imwaqqfa mill-Isqof N Cauchi u l-Kav Koli Apap fl-1960) u l-Kurja t'Għawdex. Importanti li nħallu lil dan il-qaddis patrun tagħna jdawwalna fil-kitbiet tagħna, hu li kellu l-motto matul ħajtu: *Cor ad cor loquitur -- qalb ma' qalb tiddjaloga!*

Il-festa tal-Patrun tat-tfal u ż-żgħażaġħ il-qaddis minn Torin San Gwann Bosco tagħlaq dan ix-xahar. Fil-Belt Victoria, fi Pjazza Sant Wistin, għandna Ċentru kbir u attrezzat ġmielu f'ġieħ San Gwann Bosco li tela' bl-inizjattiva tas-saċerdot

qribu. Is-swali taċ-ċinema jerġgħu jibdew jieħdu l-ħajja u f'xi nħawi t'Għawdex taf tinzerta wkoll xi biċċa xogħol tal-palk. Fl-10 ta' Frar tiġi l-festa tan-Nawfraġju ta' San Pawl li nfakkru kemm fil-Munxar kif ukoll fil-Belt Valletta u f'tit wara l-festa tal-maħbubin, San Valentinu! Imma ħarsa ħafifa lejn il-Kalendarju turina li fl-10 ta' Frar din is-sena se jaħbat Ras ir-Randan u għalhekk nifhem li l-festa tal-Appostlu tal-Ġnus timxi xi f'tit 'l quddiem. Id-dilettanti tal-Karnival bla dubju diġa bdew il-ġlieda kontra l-ħin biex jipprovdur spetaklu fl-Enclosure ta' Pjazza Indipendenza Victoria kif ukoll xi wħud mill-Kunsilli Lokali li wkoll itellgħu serati Karnivaleski filmisraħ ewlieni tar-raħal. In-Nadur jibqa' magħruf

Għawdxin Dun Pawl Micallef fl-erbġinijiet. Mas-snin kompli jikber u jiżviluppa taħt is-Salezjani u iktar tard taħt it-tmexxija ta' saċerdoti djoċesani. Id-direttur preżenti huwa Fr Effie Masini li hu ddedikat totalment u ma jiqafx minuta. Bir-riħ tiegħu l-Oratorju Don Bosco mexa 'l quddiem b'passi ta' ġgant u llum sar bejta ta' attivitajiet li ma jaqtgħu xejn. Il-bini jinkludi Kappella sabiħa u moderna li kompliet tiegħu l-ħajja b'tant xogħol u għożża li rat mingħand Fr Louis Bezzina li b'xorti ħażina miet qasir il-ġhomor. Insibu wkoll il-palk li huwa ferm attiv għax id-Direttur preżenti jemmen sħiħ fil-potenzjal ta' dan il-medium. Fuq dan il-palk u minn hawn ħarġu l-aqwa atturi Għawdxin. Il-Ħadd jintwerew ukoll films għal familja kollha. Matul is-sajf l-Oratorju jorganizza wkoll għadd ta' attivitajiet għat-tfal. Bla dubju l-qofol ta' hawn hija l-festa li ssir lil San Gwann Bosco li tintemm bil-Purċissjoni bl-istatwa tal-qaddis bis-sehem taż-żewġ baned li għandna fil-Victoria (sena tiegħu sehem banda u s-sena ta' wara tiegħu sehem l-oħra). Tagħlaq il-festa il-Gozo Youth Orchestra, orkestra taż-żgħażaġħ li tippreżenta programm ta' mużika popolari fuq il-palk taħt id-direzzjoni tal-fundatur u surmast tagħha Mro Joseph Grech. Ilni nippreżenta din is-serata sa mill-bidu li ilha ssir!

Kif mistenni, il-kampanja tagħna terġa' tibda tiegħu l-ħajja u tħaddar ġmielha wara x-xita li kellna u passigġata fil-kampanja fuq it-twapet tal-ħdura tiftaħlek il-pulmuni u timlihomlok b'arja friska u nadifa li ma ssibhiex fl-ibliet tagħna. Il-kesħa tinħass ġmielha wkoll u għalhekk wieħed irid jilbes sewwa biex ma jlaqqatx xi riħ. Il-bajjiet issa jisfaw vojta min-nies għaliex il-baħar jaf ikun qawwi u jaħshlek xi waħda jekk tgħaddi minn

għal Karnival Spontanju hekk kif jibda jroxx id-dlam u l-attendenzi ma jonqsux. Naturalment it-temp jilgħab parti mportanti matul dawn il-festi qodma u folkloristiċi li jmorru lura lejn żmien il-Kavallieri, għax bexxa xita taf titfgħek il-baħar u xhur sħaħ ta' xogħol u saġrificċju jogħsfu fix-xejn f'kemm ilni ngħidlek. Dis-sena dawn il-festi ġejjin fuqna kmieni mhux ħażin; jintemmu t-Tlieta 9 ta' Frar.

Wara l-Karnival, ifeġġ fuqna żmien totalment differenti – żmien ta' sawm, astinenza u penitenza, iż-żmien għażiż u qaddis tar-Randan. Hafna joqisuh żmien sabiħ li miegħu għandna marbuta ħafna drawwiet sbieħ. Imma sa ma jasal dak iż-żmien nerġgħu niltaqgħu jekk Alla jrid. Sliem u saħħa.





## Malta-Portugal relations

From Wikipedia

**Malta-Portugal relations** are foreign relations between Malta and Portugal. Malta has an embassy in Lisbon and 4 honorary consulates (in Algarve, Azores, Lisbon and Porto). Portugal has an embassy and an honorary consulate in Valletta. Both countries are full members of the European Union and of the Union for the Mediterranean. Established in 2013, Malta-Portugal Chamber of Commerce aims to play a pivotal role in the promotion of trade and commercial relations between the Maltese and Portuguese business communities. Throughout history, these two countries have crossed paths in many ways and on many levels and a great deal of potential exists for

enhanced commercial relations which can benefit all.

### State visits

Eddie Fenech Adami, visited Portugal between November 11, 2008 and November 11, 2008. President Adamia made a two-day state visit to Portugal in June 2009. During his visit he held talks with his Portuguese counterpart Aníbal Cavaco Silva, the Prime Minister José Sócrates, and the President of Parliament Jaime José de Matos da Gama.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Trade

In 2007, Antonio Russo Dias, the Portuguese Ambassador to Malta said: "I don't think that the fact that Portugal has the EU Presidency now will be a factor in improving trade and economic links between Malta and Portugal. However there is a bilateral plan to improve these relations with the recent opening of embassies in the respective countries so, yes there certainly is the will to improve links. There might be increased awareness of Portugal through the EU Presidency but not a direct link, at least in my opinion".<sup>[4]</sup> Portuguese Banif Bank opened its first branch in Malta in 2008 and projected that it will have up to "25 more branches within five years and secure 10 per cent of the market".

### Diplomatic relations

Russo Dias was Portugal's first resident ambassador to Malta, ending his mission in September 2008. According to Maltese Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi, relations between the two countries had reached unprecedented levels thanks to his efforts.<sup>[6]</sup>

In June 2008 the Maltese ambassador in Portugal, Salv Stellini, paid a last call on Anibal Cavaco Silva, the President of Portugal, ending his tenure as Malta's resident Ambassador in Lisbon. Cavaco Silva thanked Stellini for his support in setting up the Portuguese Embassy in Malta, and appointed him a member of Portugal's Order of Merit.

## Maltese woman breeds alpacas in Portugal



times of malta.com

Photo: Rafael Marchante/Reuters

Lisa Vella-Gatt, 46, hugs her alpaca Rowen at her farm near Benfeita, Portugal. Lisa, who is Maltese, went to Portugal from England in 2009 to set up Monte Frio Alpacas, a project in which she breeds the wool-producing species. Lisa's 14 alpacas produce about 50 kilos of wool annually.

## In general, can Spaniards, Portuguese, Italians, Maltese, Sicilians, Sardinians, Corsicans and South French (Occitanians?) be distinguished from one another? How?.

By Adrien Lucas Ecoffet. Frenchman/American.

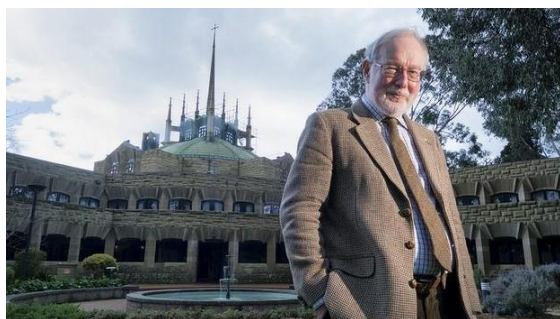
If you mean "racially" that would be difficult, but that applies to pretty much all white Europeans. You can make a rough guess and assume that people with darker hair, eyes and complexion come from further south. That might help a little bit, but don't expect it to be that effective. Distinguishing the languages/accents should be easy even to the relatively untrained ears.

I've never heard Maltese, but it should sound very different from all the others since it isn't even a romance language. Nearly nobody in southern France speaks occitan so they should have a French accent which is very recognizable (some, especially if they come from Marseille, will have an accent that is recognizably French but also quite distinctive). Likewise, many corsicans just speak French, though about 45% use Corsican regularly (which does not mean primarily however). I've never heard someone with a Corsican accent speak English, but my guess is that it would sound somewhat like a French accent with an Italian intonation. I think Spanish and Italian accents/languages are distinguishable. It's mostly about the different rhythm really. It seems Sicily has a language situation similar to Corsica, while Sardinian should sound fairly different from the other languages, but I don't exactly know how since I've never heard it.

## **Fra' Professor Richard Dival - Melbourne Australia**

From Wikipedia

**FRA PROFESSOR RICHARD DIVALL** AO, OBE (born 9 September 1945, Sydney) is a conductor and musicologist. After nine years as a music producer at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, from 1972 on the invitation of Dame Joan Hammond he became the music director of the Victoria State Opera in Melbourne, where he remained for twenty-five years. A further five years were spent as Principal Resident Conductor of Opera Australia. His teachers included Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Reginald Goodall and Wolfgang Wagner.



Conductor Richard Dival outside Melbourne University's Newman College dome.  
Photo: Luis Ascui/Getty Images

Frà Professor Richard S B Dival AO OBE OS+J PhD (UnivDivinity) DLet (Hon Mon) Doc Univ (Hon ACU) FRAS FRNS Formerly Music Director, Victoria State Opera. Knight of Malta in Solemn Religious Profession. Vice-Chancellor's Professorial Fellow, Monash

University; Assoc Professor of Music, The University of Melbourne; and Visiting Professor, The University of Malta. Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, The University of Divinity and at the Catholic Theological College, Melbourne.

**Repertoire** - He has conducted many concerts, ballets, and 151 operas, particularly works of the late baroque, Mozart, Handel, Gounod, Berlioz and Verdi. These include the complete operas of Claudio Monteverdi, Berlioz's *Les Troyens* and Richard Strauss' *Elektra*. He conducted Verdi's *Don Carlos*,<sup>[1]</sup> the first opera to be staged in the State Theatre of the Victorian Arts Centre in 1984.<sup>[3]</sup> His repertoire includes *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* by Wagner. The most recent operas that he directed were Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*, Hasse's *Antonio e Cleopatra*, Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*, and Puccini's final opera *Turandot* at Monash University. **Academic career** - He is a Vice-Chancellor's Professorial Fellow at Monash University<sup>[4]</sup> and an Honorary Principal Fellow in Music at the University of Melbourne, and the University of Malta. As a musicologist he has edited over 150 works of early Maltese composers especially from the period of the Knights, including the complete sacred music and operas by Nicolas Isouard (1773–1818). He is currently editing the sacred music and operas of Girolamo Abos (1715–1760). Four volumes in his editions of 24 works of Michel' Angelo Vella have been published by Lyrebird Press [Paris/Melbourne]. In 2014 he was appointed an Honorary Research Fellow at The University of Divinity, Melbourne, and in September 2014 a Visiting Professor of Music at King's College, London.

For 45 years he has pioneered the study of, edited and published many volumes of early Australian music. Dival is the Chairman of the Marshall-Hall Trust, and is completing an edition of the complete works of the English baroque composer Michael Christian Festing, and the Complete Sacred Music of Girolamo Abos (1715–1760).

He works in several fields at Monash, is a member of the committee for the construction of the new Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, as well as assisting the staff and students at that School. Richard enjoys mentoring and teaching young Australian conductors and singers. He is currently preparing a project of musical events that will commemorate the Centenary of Gallipoli, especially music composed during the Great War. With Lady Primrose Potter AC, in 2015 he was the co-producer of the ANZAC Commemorative CD *Gallipoli - A Tribute*, which was sponsored by The Ian Potter Foundation and Monash University.





## ISOUARD NICOLAS: (1773-1818) MALTESE COMPOSER, KNOWN AS NICOLO DI MALTA.

Nicolò Isouard (1773-1818) is considered Malta's national composer. Isouard's early career began on the Island of Malta, when after studies in France and Naples, he returned to his homeland.

He later went on to have a celebrated operatic career in France. But, from 1794 to 1798 he was an aspiring composer, and employee of the Order of Malta, who then ruled the islands, and for whom in anticipation of promotion, he composed a portfolio of some thirty-five sacred works.

The manuscripts of this music, set to various sacred texts, had been taken by the composer to France in 1800, but do not appear amongst his effects and scores itemised after his death. In 1994 the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris

acquired most of these manuscripts, and they were brought to public notice by Professor Alain Blondy of the Sorbonne, by the music historian Joseph Vella Bondin, and the Maltese historian Dun Gwann Azzopardi..

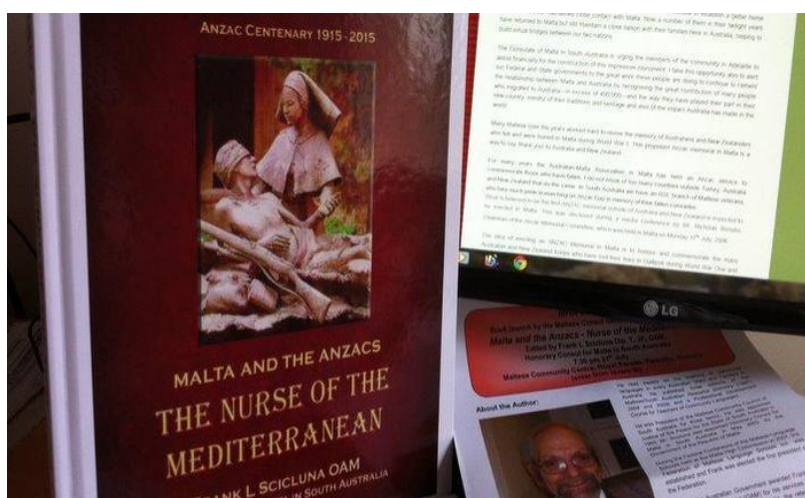
We recognised the importance of this collection, most of which had presumably never been performed. Nicolò Isouard and his sacred music, along with music on Malta under the Order of Malta, provide the core focus of his works.

It is important to provide a background of the Order of Malta, as a religious order, and as the sovereign entity ruling Malta at the time. As Nicolò Isouard's employer, the Order played a crucial role in his early life and in his development as a composer.

During the only period of his brief life when Isouard worked on Malta, the Order provided him with sympathetic patronage and employment. This period, from 1794 to 1798, was primarily devoted to the composition and performance of sacred music for the Order in their great Conventual Church in Valletta – now St John's Co- Cathedral.

Apart from his *Requiem*, these years were the only time in Isouard's career that he wrote music for the church. Leaving Malta in 1800 he took a new career path, in composing for the lyric theatre, and except for his orchestration of Nicolò Jommelli's *Missa Pro Defunctorum* would never again write any music of a religious nature, or set to music any religious texts. This is a revealing aspect about Isouard, the man, and his personal frailties, but it is indicative of the composer's desire to work, and indeed succeed in a milieu that was really sympathetic to his artistic temperament.

Very little has been written about this area, or about the composer's early life and career. Apart from two short excerpts by Guglielmi and Le Pin, none of the music presented in this edition of Isouard's complete sacred music, like most of the music excerpts from works of his teachers, has ever been published before.~



## THE BOOK OF THE YEAR 2015

### MALTA AND THE ANZACS NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

A COMMEMORATIVE BOOK  
PUBLISHED BY THE MALTESE RSL  
SUB BRANCH OF SOUTH  
AUSTRALIA DURING THE ANZAC  
CENTENARY 1915 - 2015  
MALTA'S ROLE IN WW1  
PROUD TO BE IN EVERYONE'S  
LIBRARY

Write to us to obtain a copy

## BIG AUSTRALIAN ICONS

The **big things** of Australia are a loosely related set of large structures, some of which are novelty architecture and some are sculptures. There are estimated to be over 150 such objects around the country, the first being the Big Scotsman in Medindie, Adelaide, which was built in 1963. There are big things in every state in Australia. Most big things began as tourist traps found along major roads between destinations.

The big things have become something of a cult phenomenon, and are sometimes used as an excuse for a road trip, where many or all big things are visited and used as a backdrop to a group photograph. Many of the big things are considered works of folk art and have been heritage-listed.

### The Big Banana - Coffs Harbour NSW –

[http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/new\\_south\\_wales/photograph\\_h\\_coffs\\_harbour\\_big\\_banana.htm](http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/new_south_wales/photograph_h_coffs_harbour_big_banana.htm) The Big Banana is one of the most famous residents in Coffs Harbour. Standing 5m high by 11m long it would be hard to miss it! The Big Banana is suitably located out the front of a Gift Shop surrounded by a Banana Plantation. This 40+ year old sculpture was the very first of Australia's "Big Things."



### The Big Cassowary - Mission Beach QLD –

[http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/queensland/photograph\\_mission\\_beach\\_big\\_cassowary.htm](http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/queensland/photograph_mission_beach_big_cassowary.htm) The Big Cassowary at Mission Beach is a tribute to the endangered bird that can be found in the gorgeous World Heritage Rainforest in the area. The Big Cassowary can be found at Wongaling Beach as part of the Shopping Complex and stands 5m high!



### The Big Lobster - Kingston SA

[http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/south\\_australia/photograph\\_kingston\\_se\\_big\\_lobster.htm](http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/south_australia/photograph_kingston_se_big_lobster.htm) Kingston, a well-known port, is famous for its lobsters and also the Big Lobster that resides there! Standing an impressive 18.2m high it houses a restaurant AND gift shop underneath! It is a must see sight if in the area!



### The Big Merino - Goulburn NSW -

[http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/new\\_south\\_wales/photograph\\_h\\_goulburn\\_merrino\\_tourist\\_attraction.htm](http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/new_south_wales/photograph_h_goulburn_merrino_tourist_attraction.htm) The Big Merino in Goulburn is a testament to the huge wool-growing industry in the Goulburn area. It stands 15m high and 21m long and can be found beside Hume Street, on the Canberra side of town. There are different wool products for sale as well as information on the production of wool etc.

[http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/queensland/photograph\\_gympie\\_big\\_pineapple\\_1.htm](http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/queensland/photograph_gympie_big_pineapple_1.htm)

### The Big Pineapple - Woombye, (Near Nambour) QLD -

The Big Pineapple can be found at the Sunshine Plantation, a tourist theme park - alongside the Big Macadamia Nut in Woombye (near Nambour). This Big Pineapple is made of fiberglass and stands 12m tall at the entrance to the plantation. Information can be found about the tropical fruit industry within the Big Pineapple as well as an awesome view from its summit!



### The Big Prawn - Ballina NSW -

[http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/new\\_south\\_wales/photograph\\_big\\_prawn.htm](http://www.australianexplorer.com/photographs/new_south_wales/photograph_big_prawn.htm) The Big Prawn in Ballina stands 6m x 9m and encompasses a gift shop and eateries. It is a tribute to the big seafood market in the area.





## Interesting facts about Queensland - Australia

Queensland is a wonderland of adventures - and trust us - you really must see it for yourself. While you're visiting the Sunshine State you can...

- Get lost in a rainforest land before time.
- Unwind on a beach in a tropical paradise.
- Go under the sea on the one and only Great Barrier Reef.
- Lose yourself in the starry skies of the outback.
- Sail through the breeze on a yacht in The Whitsundays.
- Soak up the sun while you surf a legendary break on the Gold Coast.

One day we hope you'll join us in this land of dreams. But until then, be inspired and remember that some of the best memories are made in flip flops.

- With an area of 1,727,000 square kilometres, Queensland is the second largest state in Australia. The biggest is Western Australia. Queensland is nearly five times the size of Japan, seven times the size of Great Britain, and two and a half times the size of Texas.
- Queensland has five of Australia's eleven World Natural Heritage areas ( <http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/world-heritage-areas/index.html> ). These include the Scenic Rim National Parks, Fraser Island, Riversleigh Fossil Fields, the Wet Tropics (including Daintree National Park), and one of the Wonders of the World—the Great Barrier Reef.
- More than half of Queensland's population lives outside the greater metropolitan area of Brisbane—a large proportion compared with the rest of highly urbanised Australia.
- About one third of Queenslanders are migrants or the children of migrants. Most settlers in Queensland during the 19th century were from Britain and Europe. In recent years there has been an increasing number of new settlers from South-East Asia.
- Queensland is home to more than 4 million people ( <http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au/products/briefs/aust-demographic-stats/qld-pop-counter.php> ).
- The vast majority of Queensland receives an average of between eight and nine hours of sunshine every day.
- Queensland has more than 1000 species of native vertebrates, many of them unique to the region.
- The first Labor government in the world took office in Queensland in 1899.
- The international airline Qantas (Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services) was established in Longreach, Queensland, in 1920.
- 2008 was the 20th anniversary of World Expo 88—a landmark event in the history of Brisbane that launched an exciting period of growth and development.
- There are over 200 national parks in Queensland ( <http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/parks/index.php> ), covering 6.5 million hectares.
- Free education was implemented in Queensland in 1870.
- The first Queensland railway opened in July 1865, from Ipswich to Grandchester.
- XXXX beer is one of Queensland's well-known products and was established back in 1877.
- On 18 May 1907, women voted for the first time in a Queensland state election.
- Brisbane-born pioneer aviator Charles Kingsford Smith and his colleagues completed the first air crossing of the Pacific, from San Francisco to Brisbane, in 1928.
- Australian poet Banjo Patterson's verse Waltzing Matilda was first sung publicly at the North Gregory Hotel in Winton, Queensland, on 6 April 1895.
- Queensland has the only State Parliament in Australia with one House, the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Council (Upper House) was abolished in 1922.
- The Royal Flying Doctor Service started operating on 17 May 1928 when pilot Arthur Affleck flew the first flying doctor, Dr Kenyon St Vincent Welch, on the first official flight from Cloncurry to Julia Creek in response to an emergency call.
- The Australian Labor Party was formed in Queensland in 1891 following the bitter defeat of the shearer's strikes of 1890–91.



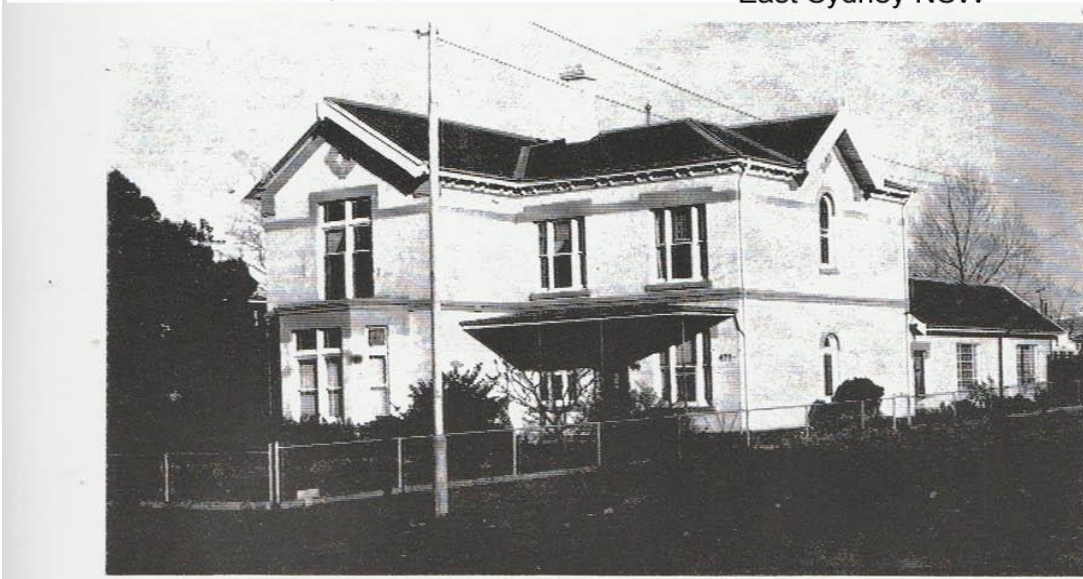
*1948 - THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL*



Fr. George Scerri, Provincial, died  
in Melbourne on 13 July 1980  
due to injuries



MSSP HOUSE  
Stanley Street  
East Sydney NSW



AS IT WAS - The Missionary House, Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria  
Now demolished and replaced by a modern Maltese Community Centre



## MALTA - In the good old days



**by Chris Watson** - My partner and I watched a documentary about Malta during WW2. She was extra-specially interested because she grew up there and left before she was a teenager. So everything remembered on Malta is happy and sunlit, collecting bottles on a handcart, old ladies scrubbing steps etc. When she gets sentimental drunk that's where she goes. I can't wait to go too.

During WW2 the Maltese got a right battering. Scrappy monochrome children in shorts huddled in tunnels beneath the city. Embattled mothers stirred empty pots, smiling grimly for the camera. It was a siege and people were really hungry. But then there was bombing and organising and just getting by and then surprisingly one codger recalled that you don't think about being hungry all the time. That you

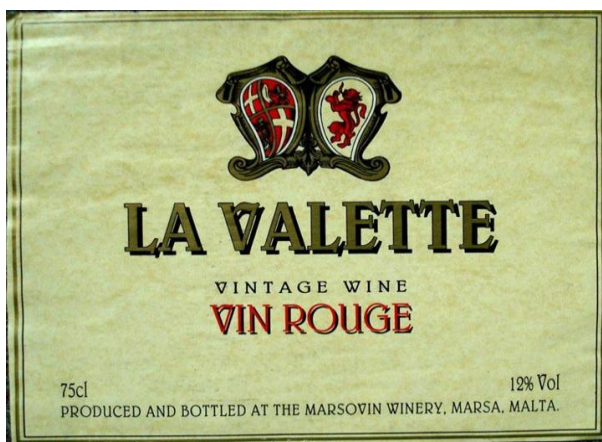
get used to it.

I remember seeing on the news a few weeks ago that Malta is now one of the most obese places in Europe. That doesn't surprise me. I can see how after the end of extreme rationing you might want to eat a lot of cake. The trouble is cake is now very cheap and easy to get hold of. And I couldn't help wondering if the kids who grew up through rationing, and admirably wanted to make sure their own children never knew that kind of hunger, weren't more healthy than the current children of the island.

It's not surprising that privation makes the best of us. If you use more calories than you eat you get thinner. If you have to do hard work you get stronger. If you think you're going to have to out-run a sabre tooth you are less inclined to carry round surplus pounds. Now we pay for excess foodstuffs and then we pay for gym membership. Our metabolisms have become market commodities. Everyone understands the formula but the shops are full and even the poor can afford to live badly.

I just can't bear the flatulent pantomime of injustice, regurgitated through the media as our struggle with obesity, with addiction, with the hardships of life-threatening amounts of over-privilege. Every day we are asked to celebrate another citizen's redemption from temptation, their impressive ability to not eat so much it kills them. Well done everybody, we made it. More people in the world are now dying of over-eating than hunger, that's got to be a win.

Because at least they have a choice. That's what the market is all about isn't it? Choice. You can choose diet foods or exercise machinery, advanced cooking technology. There are lots of different options available. Press the red button for details. Although none of them seem to work so well as not having a choice. Which is a little depressing. If only we were all poorer.



A drop of Red Maltese Vintage Wine



Postage Stamp 2008 – Postman and his bicycle circa 1948



## Rise and decline of Toronto's Maltese community

**With its immigration halted and an aging generation passing on, Toronto's Maltese community struggles to stay connected.**

**By:** Nicholas Keung Immigration Reporter

Albert Vella, 68, still finds reason to celebrate his Maltese roots, despite a declining population in Toronto's Maltese community. He is organizing a cocktail reception for visiting Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja in 2010.

When Albert Vella learned that renowned Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja was coming to Toronto, he called the singer's publicist in England and began organizing a reception to greet his countryman. Toronto's Maltese community is old and closely knit, and hosting guests from home and embracing them as family simply runs in its blood.

But the party that the community is throwing for the tenor Wednesday at the Ambiance Banquet Hall also sheds light on an immigrant community in decline – with its immigration to Canada coming to a halt, an aging generation passing and descendants becoming full-fledged Canadians.

"It is part of our culture to greet any Maltese visiting here," said Vella, 68, who came here with his wife and three children in 1977. "But to be honest, we try to find any excuse to get the community together to celebrate our affiliation with Malta. We are still part of Malta."

The first documented Maltese arrived in Canada in 1826 and the majority came after World War II. In the community's heyday during the 1970s and 1980s, there were more than 45,000 Maltese in Canada, though the 1986 census reported a population of only 21,855. In the latest census, only 4,675 people in Toronto identified Maltese as their mother tongue.



*Dr. John J Portelli - Professor, Department of Humanities, Social Science and Social Justice Education and Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education at OISE University of Toronto.*

While most Maltese immigrants came earlier in the last century as economic migrants, Toronto Maltese historian John Portelli said the last wave, arriving here between 1977 and 1982, fled political instability back home. Migration from the small Mediterranean country has literally ended since, as its own economy thrived.

"The older generation started dying gradually, no more immigrants are coming and some have returned," said Portelli, a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. "The community is definitely declining. The language is lost among the second generation."

The Maltese's success in integrating into Canadian society also contributes to its own decline, said Portelli, who came to Canada in 1977 with a Commonwealth scholarship for his graduate studies at McGill University. Up until the early 1980s, the old Maltese Village in Toronto's Junction area was home to more than 8,000 Maltese Canadians, who now have spread across Greater Toronto.

The number of social clubs in the Junction has dropped from nine to four. Just a few years ago, the community's monthly newspaper, L-Ahbar, also folded, apparently due to declining circulation.

"There is still the colonial attitude and influence that 'you'd better speak English than Maltese.' The bias is still there today," said Portelli, 56. "Integration can help you economically, but it kills you in terms of maintaining your identity."

Joe Sherri, president of the Maltese Canadian Federation, said the group was made up of 20 social clubs at its inception in 1980; today only 12 are left. "If you go to any of our clubs on Fridays or Saturdays, you won't find any young people there," said Sherri, 63, who came here in 1965 for job opportunities and now runs his own food distribution business. "Our biggest challenge is to get our young people involved."

These days, young Maltese only show up at big community celebrations such as annual Mnarja, the festival of light, in June. The only hope of closing the generation gap is to draw youth in through groups such as the Malta Band Club or its popular soccer club, said Vella.

"Something that concerns us a lot is where to find the new blood to replace the old blood," lamented the retired banker, whose three adult children, all professionally employed, speak very little Maltese. "We don't have an answer yet."



**TEACHING BILINGUALISM IN MALTA AND OVERSEAS**

Every human being is capable of learning the parental language in a natural way. When children start attending school they are exposed and taught not only grammatical Maltese but also other languages. In our situation, English is the dominant language taught in OUR school. Learning and speaking two languages simultaneously is called bilingualism. It is to our advantage that most of our people in Malta can speak English or else we would have been isolated and cut off from the rest of the world.

English is considered as a universal language. In fact, English is our official language together with Maltese. English is our second language and using it, we are able to communicate with the rest of the world. It is our right and obligation to insist to preserve our Maltese language, which we inherited from our forbearers for many centuries. This language preservation is not an easy task but it is not impossible.

We sincerely salute those thousands of Maltese who in these last decades worked hard and fought to keep the Maltese language alive and widely spoken so that it will not end up in the archives of the national library. We have strong conviction that the Maltese language will never cease to exist in Malta. Fortunately, we are witnessing the language widely used in the modern media like newspapers, internet, radio and television. Multitude of magazines, books and other publications in Maltese have been printed in these last 50 years. Maltese is widely taught in schools and even at university level.

**Maintenance of the language by Maltese living overseas**

The responsibility of the maintenance of the Maltese language rests mainly on the parents and the many Maltese associations operating overseas. Parents must insist that their children and grandchildren be taught how to speak the language especially at home. The Maltese associations should try to establish and support the language schools where our beautiful language is taught to future generations.

It is worth mentioning that the Maltese Community Councils of New South Wales and Victoria are striving to maintain the existing Maltese schools.

**Maltese language schools in many parts of the world**

During the last few decades, we witnessed very active Maltese language schools in the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia. They organise an annual national conference for teachers and coordinators of these schools to discuss the administration of schools and the teaching techniques. We also hold professional development for teachers of Maltese. The Federation of Maltese Schools in Australia is the umbrella body to coordinate these schools and assist the teachers..

Although the community language schools are subsidised by the Australian Government, they did request other assistance from the Maltese government. An online year 12 matriculation course was offered on the internet, which was approved and accredited by the Board of Studies of South Australia. Several students from diverse States and Territories have undertaken this course and were awarded a certificate of achievement by the Education Department of South Australia. Unfortunately, the course was withdrawn because it was running at a loss.

The Maltese ministry of education several times donated books and other teaching material to our schools, through the initiative of the respective Malta High Commission in many parts of the world. However, we found that it is not easy to convince parents and Maltese associations operating abroad the importance of the Maltese language to strengthen the culture and the identity of Malta. They argue that the Maltese language is not a viable proposition for their children and they are better off to learn another language, which will be more financial beneficial for future employment. According to them Greek, Italian Japanese Chinese or other Asiatic languages are such languages.

We also strongly believe that there is a big discrepancy between EU and non-EU Maltese living abroad in the provision of teaching Maltese, which is obviously significant for the Maltese living in EU countries and completely neglected for the Maltese living in non-EU countries. It is also becoming more difficult to find teachers who are qualified in teaching Maltese in many countries of the world. Our children are very proficient in the use of IT; perhaps we can use this medium to reach them and those who are willing to learn this unique language.

You may wish to read the consultative document, 'A Language Policy for Early Years' produced by the Ministry for Education and Employment and give feedback:

<http://education.gov.mt/en/Documents/A%20Language%20Policy%20for%20the%20Early%20Years%20Consultation%20Document.pdf>